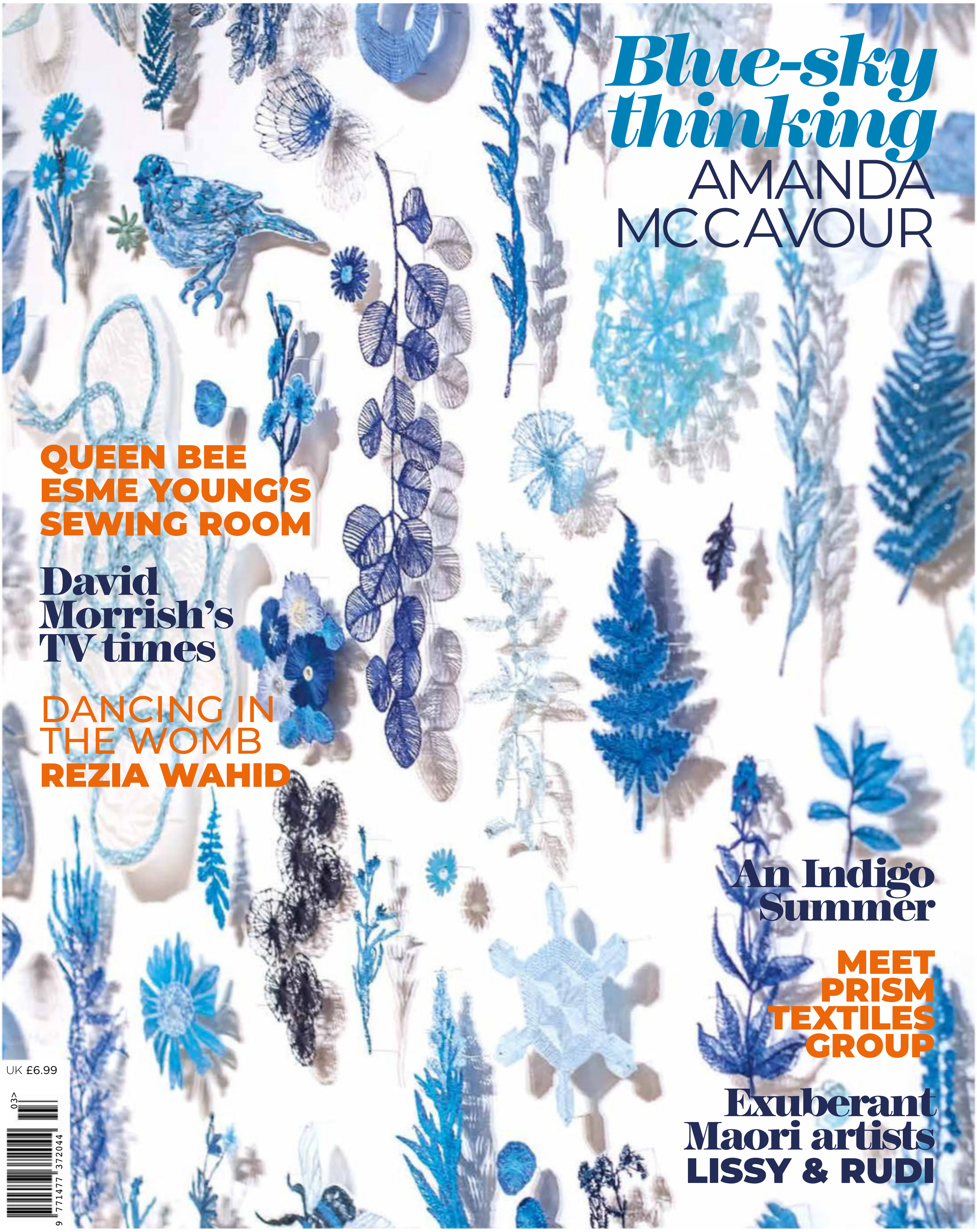
THE TEXTILE ART MAGAZINE

embroidery



Blue-sky thinking
AMANDA MCCAVOUR

QUEEN BEE
ESME YOUNG'S SEWING ROOM

David Morrish's TV times

DANCING IN THE WOMB
REZIA WAHID

An Indigo Summer

MEET PRISM TEXTILES GROUP

Exuberant Maori artists
LISSY & RUDI

UK £6.99
03>
9 771477 372044

March April 2023

VISIT…

LANZAROTE
Caliente.com

brother
at your side

Imagine it, then create it

Choose precision technology for a professional finish. Our easy-to-use embroidery machines make stunning designs effortless.

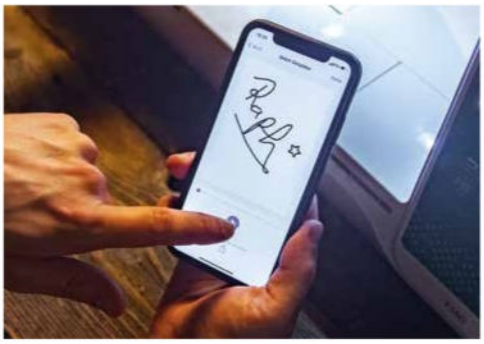
F540

NV880E

XE1

Artspira

Hand draw your very own creations and upload instantly via our Artspira app, helping you combine art and inspiration!



Visit our website to get started:
sewingcraft.brother.eu

BrotherSewingUK

brother

DISCOUNT CODE IS **EMBG23**

THE STITCH festival

The ultimate day out for craft lovers

Knitting · Crochet · Dressmaking · Quilting · Needlecraft

23rd – 26th March 2023

Business Design Centre, London

Workshops

Displays, competitions & features

Shopping

thestitchfestival

thestitchfestival

For more information: **thestitchfestival.co.uk**

Brought to you by Immediate Live, the organisers of The Knitting & Stitching Shows

IMMEDIATE LIVE

Discount applies to standard advance adult / concession tickets. Offer expires 11.59pm Wednesday 22nd March. Offer not valid Sunday 26th March 2023.

from the editor

Welcome! I was struck while reading the proofs this month that where and with whom we create can sometimes be as important as the resulting artwork – sometimes the journey can be the destination. From husband and wife, to other creative partnerships, from single sewers to less tangible online groups, many are represented here.

Mexican duo Gabriel and Fernanda, partners both in and out of the gallery, focus on their home and their role as hosts which has provided inspiration for their lovely warm textiles. Similarly, the duo Lissy and Rudi are partners in art and life. Their Maori heritage and concept of home inspires them too, but with very different results – fantastic joyous neons, sunglasses required.

Amanda McCavour works alone to produce hundreds of specimen-style thread sculptures that painstakingly come together in the final exhibition, but loves to hear and meet people working in her block.

Instagram has been instrumental in bringing stitchers together as they create, and stitching communities have proliferated. For example, Vanessa Marr's @domesticdusters is a place to share in the slogan-led bright yellow duster project. Her shout-out in partnership with the Profanity Embroidery Group was wicked fun.

Then there are many respected groups for stitchers, like Prism Textiles and The Embroiderers' Guild, which create their own communities and support networks. The Guild is currently offering virtual stitch-alongs, as well as online courses and talks, and on page 53, tells how it collects and values the artworks of those stitchers who have gone before.

TV plays a role too. Some of us stitched along with *Grayson's Art Club*, and now the ceramicist, and creator of tapestries, has been knighted. Inspired by the show, see the knitted Sandringham on page 54.

Digital embroiderer David Morrish shares a sewing room in his home with his wife Alison, an upholsterer, and recently managed to get his brand of stitching on TV in BBC One's *Make it at Market*. The couple have already collaborated on projects.

PhD researcher Stewart Kelly asks: why don't men stitch together as women do? When he started out only Michael Brennand-Wood was a primary mover but the situation is changing, and at the Fashion and Embroidery Show this March, We Sew Too is aiming for gender equality.

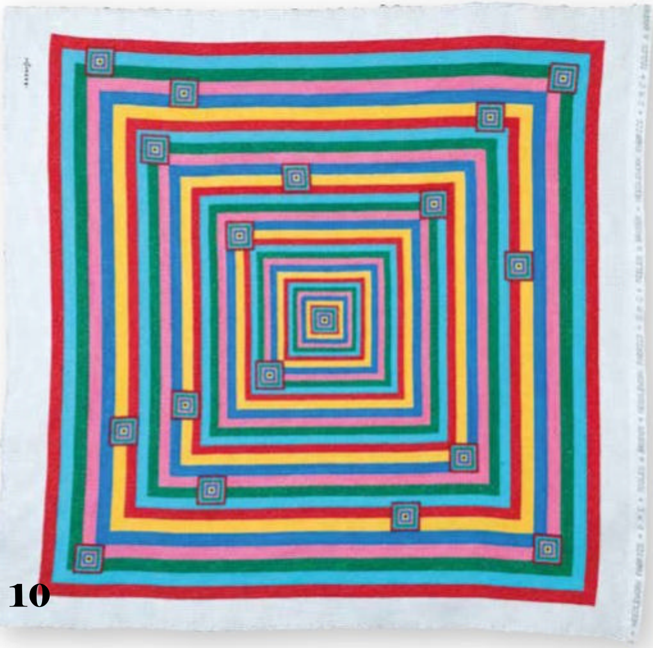
Finally, we are delighted to catch up with *The Great British Sewing Bee's* Queen Bee herself, Esme Young. Watching old episodes of the show I am struck by the number of male finalists, and the lovely group-spirit – not a prima donna in sight.

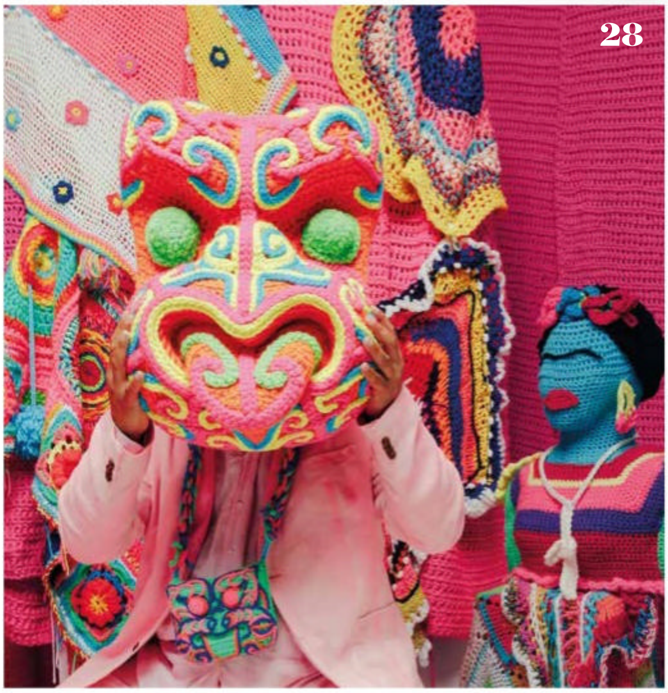
Send us a snap via #HowILikeToStitch on Instagram @embroidery_mag and until next month, enjoy the issue!

Claire

Claire Waring
EDITOR
Embroidery magazine

ON THE COVER: *The Horizon, The Ocean, The Sky* (2021-2022) by Amanda McCavour www.amandamccavour.com





embroidery

Embroidery is published six times a year in January, March, May, July, September and November by Embroiderers' Guild Enterprises Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of The Embroiderers' Guild.

The magazine was first published in 1932 and is read today by textile professionals and enthusiasts around the world. The Embroiderers' Guild is a registered charity (No. 234239), which organises an annual programme of events and awards. The Guild's Museum Collection of embroidered items is held at Bucks County Museum.

EMBROIDERYMAGAZINE.CO.UK

EDITOR
Claire Waring
07769 397790
embroideryeditorial@warnersgroup.co.uk

DESIGNER
Melanie Smith
embroidery.mag.design@gmail.com

PUBLISHER
The Embroiderers' Guild
Bucks County Museum
Church St, Aylesbury HP20 2QP
embroiderersguild.com

SALES
Media-Shed Limited, 1st Floor,
West Wing, Beater House,
Turkey Mill, Ashford Road,
Maidstone, Kent, ME14 5PP
020 3137 8582

SUBSCRIPTIONS

DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTIONS
pocketmags.com/embroidery-magazine
Single digital issue £6.99
Annual digital subscription £34.99

PRINT SUBSCRIPTIONS
mymagazinesub.co.uk/embroidery
Six monthly Direct Debit £17.50
Annual Direct Debit £34.99
Credit/Debit card annual payments
UK £37.99. EU/ROW £52.99

PRINT PLUS ARCHIVE SUBSCRIPTIONS
https://bit.ly/embroiderypd
Annual Direct Debit UK £49.99
Credit/Debit card annual payments
UK £52.99. EU/ROW £67.99
For renewals, back issues, change of address,or single print copies please
+44 (0)1778 392 468
embroidery@warnersgroup.co.uk

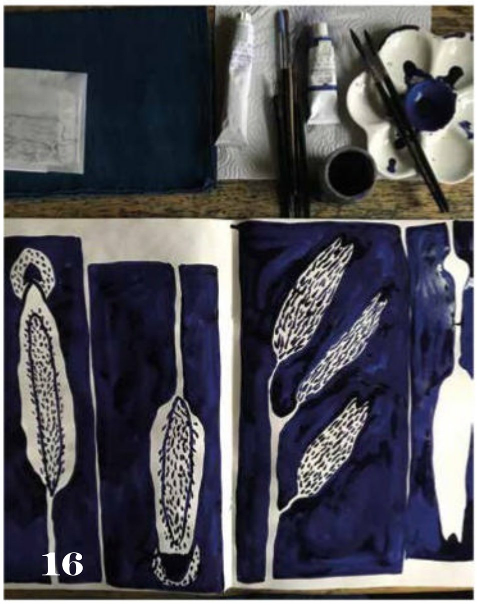
DEADLINES

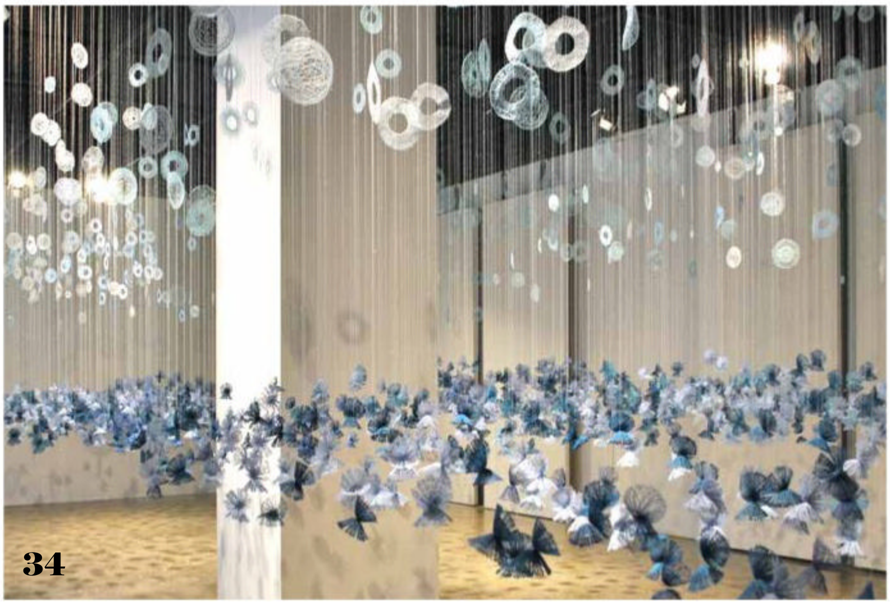
ISSUE	EDITORIAL	ADS
Jul/Aug	24 Apr	1 June
Sep/Oct.	19 June	28 July
Nov/Dec	21 Aug	25 Sep

Embroidery magazine ISSN 1477-3724 is published by Embroiderers' Guild Enterprises Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of The Embroiderers' Guild. Registered office: Bucks County Museum, Church St, Aylesbury HP20 2QP. Printer & distributor: Warners Midlands, Manor Lane, Bourne, Lincs PE10 9PH. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is strictly prohibited. *Embroidery* does not accept responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts or images. The Editor reserves the right to edit all contributions. The views expressed in *Embroidery* are not necessarily those of the Editor or The Embroiderers' Guild.

contents

march april 2023


16


34

front

07 EMBROIDERY LOVES
Oliver Bliss: #SoftLads

08 NEWS
Some stories to take note of

09 GUILD GRADUATES
Exciting prospects

10 FRESH TALENT
Willemien Downes-Wechgelaer's brilliantly-coloured world

12 FRESH TALENT
Mexican duo Celeste tell how they were inspired by the theme of 'home'

20 FIRST PERSON
Rezia Wahid's new woven work reflects her experiences of motherhood

22 A COMMON THREAD
In our new 'Meet the Group' series we profile Prism Textiles

PS... Take a one year subscription to Embroidery and we'll deliver each copy to your door free of charge!

24

features

14 THE SEWING ROOM
The Great British Sewing Bee's Esme Young invites us behind the scenes to view her London studio, which she shares with other creatives

16 AN INDIGO SUMMER
Ellie Evelyn Orrell's evocative book is about the engrossing practice of Japanese indigo dyeing which, one summer, helped her family deal with grief

24 APRIL IN PARIS
We transport you to the world of former haute couture embroiderer Rebecca Devaney as we journey through the haberdasheries and markets of Paris

28 HOUSE OF JOY
Lissy and Rudi Robinson Cole are a Maori couple whose large-scale crochet artworks positively shout with joy and a freedom of expression

32 DAVID MORRISH'S TV TIMES
Appearing on BBC One's *Make it at Market* was a high-point for David Morrish but what was to follow would give him one of his biggest-ever lows

34 COVER: OUT OF THE BLUE
Canadian artist Amanda McCavour's artworks are full-scale and full-on and comprise hundreds of intricately worked sculptures in thread

40 IN GOOD HANDS
Artist Stewart Kelly has been looking at stitch as a reflexive practice and for his PhD is quite literally watching himself sew

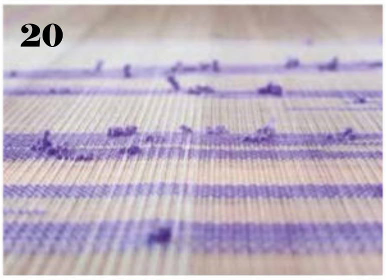
44 PICKING UP THE THREADS
Lesley Woods reveals what came next when she inherited a box of threads from her mother

48 BLOOMING MARVELLOUS
We are pleased to report that Sunbury Embroidery Gallery is all set for growth

51 ARIADNE'S THREAD
A group of embroiderers has picked up needle and thread as a riposte to Russian agression in Ukraine

52 MY KINGDOM FOR A ROBE
Historical costumier Ninya Mikhaila reveals her work on the film *The Lost King*, about Richard III

53 A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE
Donations to the Embroiderers' Guild collection


20

reviews

47 BOOKS
Mixed Media Textile Art
The Colours of Nature
Embroidered Birds and their Habitats

EXHIBITIONS
54 Grayson's Art Club: The Exhibition III at the MAC, Birmingham
55 Veronica Ryan: Turner Prize-winner at Tate Liverpool
56 Motive/Motif at Ruthin Craft Centre

57 OUT AND ABOUT

58 WHAT'S ON

40

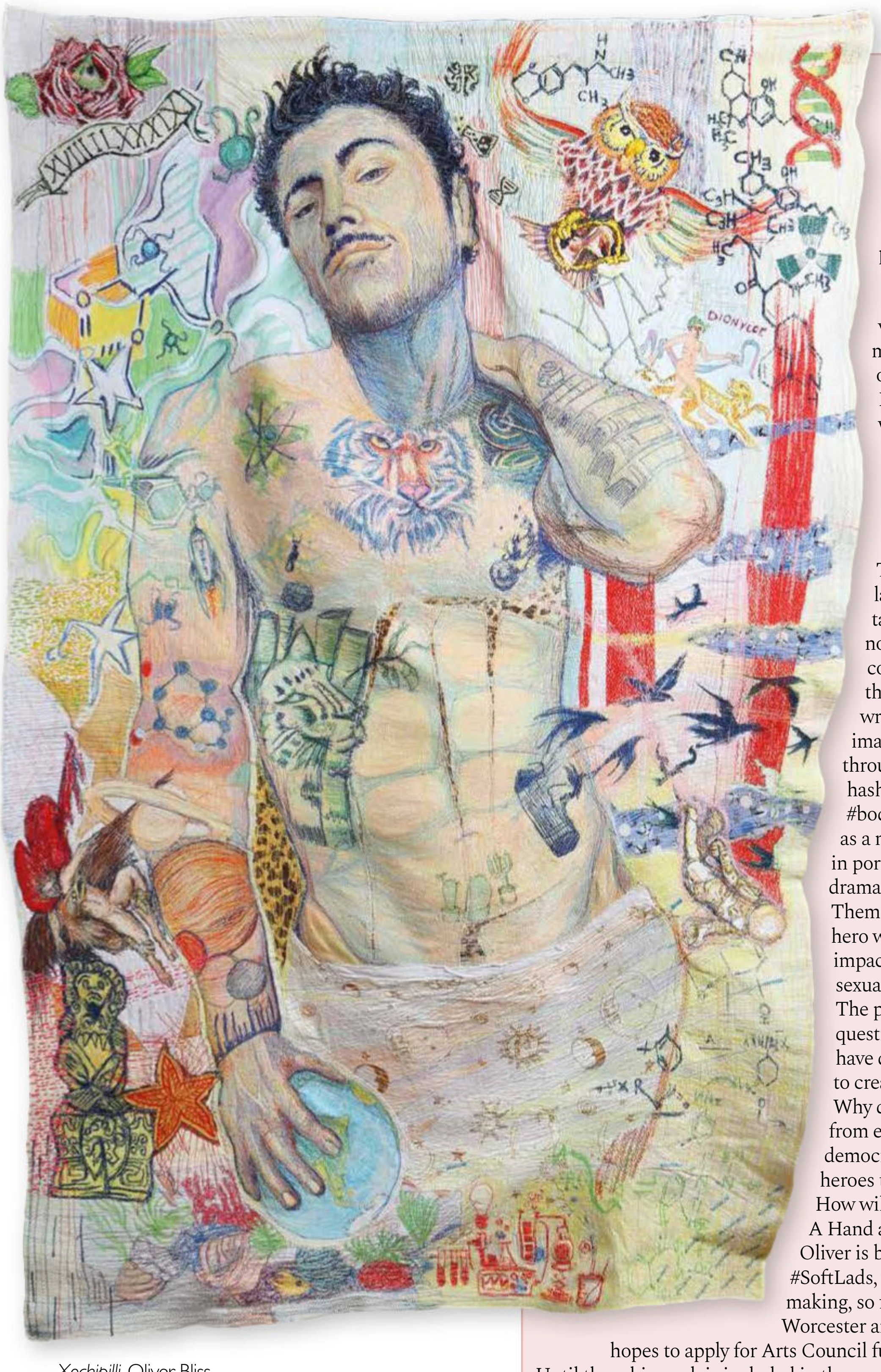
LONDON
LOOP

Gorgeous knitting, crochet, embroidery supplies
& handmade treasure

LOOPKNITTING.COM
@LOOPLONDONLOVES

METTE MEHLSEN 'FLOWER POWER' FOR LOOP

embroidery *loves*…



Xochipilli, Oliver Bliss
97cm by 147cm, 2021
PHOTO: GERALD HUGHES

Oliver Bliss likes to make a statement…

After being commissioned to create the same-sex marriage quilt with eight partner organisations and 650 contributors, to celebrate the 400 MPs who voted for the same-sex marriage bill in 2013, it was obvious he was one to watch. In #SoftLads, in partnership with The Word Association, Shout! Festival, Bransford Trust and with Arts Council England funding, he has focused on another of society's touch-points. The exhibition includes large-scale handmade tapestry portraits exploring notions of masculinity, plus communities' responses through poems and creative writing. The series portrays images of men sourced through Instagram using the hashtags #tattoos #facialtattoos #bodytattoos. Oliver uses textiles as a nod to historic approaches in portraiture and craft but with a dramatic contemporary twist. Themes include contemporary hero worship, body image, the impact of celebrity, activism, sexuality, gender and identity. The pieces aim to celebrate and question how online sub-cultures have developed through hashtags to create global communities. Why do we seek validation from each other? Why are we democratically selecting new heroes through likes and emojis? How will we be viewed in history? A Hand and Lock Prize finalist, Oliver is based in Worcester, with #SoftLads, which was two years in the making, so far touring Birmingham, Worcester and Shrewsbury. Oliver now hopes to apply for Arts Council funding to tour nationwide. Until then, his work is included in the group exhibition by Seam Collective, A Visible Thread, on show in May at the Fine Foundation Gallery (which has sea views) at Durlston Country Park, Swanage.

WWW.DURLSTON.CO.UK
OLYBLISS.COM

Congratulations to Eliza Gomersall who won the Textile Art – Student category in the Hand and Lock Prize for Embroidery 2022. Eliza also won the Worshipful Company of Broderers Associate Award. Eliza said she hoped she had made her family proud. She has recently started a scholarship with the Prince's Foundation in Gloucestershire. We featured Eliza in the November/December 2022 edition of *Embroidery*. Congratulations also go to Lucy Newman who won the Textile Art Open category. Her winning triptych imagines a nuclear wasteland where pen, ink and watercolours have been forgotten to be replaced with cotton and scraps of fabric. In her portrayal she says: 'the natural world is fused with the technological and makes glitches and distortions.'

The Hand and Lock Prize 2023 is now open for registrations at HANDEMBROIDERY.COM

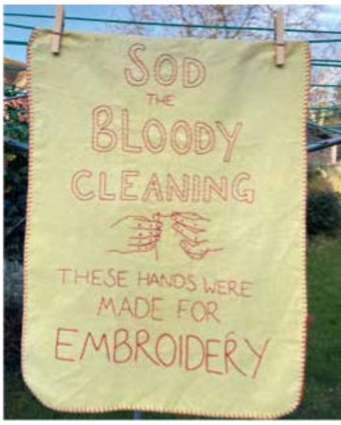
Growth industry

Zena Holloway is a photographer, maker and material innovator. She grows sustainable sculpture and fashion from grass root, taking an intuitive leap into the future to imagine a material world that is grown, not made.

As an underwater photographer she was looking for solutions to the plastic problem in our oceans when she came across willow tree roots growing in her local river. The tangled root looked like textile: what if we could grow clothes from seed? Zena has pioneered a new technique of growing wheatgrass into templates carved from beeswax. Over 12 days the shoots grow to 20cm while the roots bind below to form a naturally woven structure. With sustainability at the heart of the process, the ingredients are organic and locally sourced. Water is reused from run off and any leftover shoot, seed or root is eaten as animal fodder. Coral reefs support 25% of all marine life but scientists predict they could all be gone by 2050 due to global warming. Zena's response is to grow a coral reef to increase awareness and inspire a more thoughtfully crafted, sustainable world.

ZENAHOLLOWAY.COM/ROOT

Sweary dusters



Vanessa Marr's long-running collaborative arts project, Women & Domesticity – What's your Perspective?, has been calling for women to hand-embroider their words, images, celebrations and complaints on the theme of domesticity on to on a yellow duster since 2014. Dusters were selected because as domestic cleaning cloths they immediately capture the invisibility of domestic tasks and so-called women's work, while transforming the voices embroidered on them into powerful, craftivist catalysts for change.

While some of the work from this project informs Vanessa's academic research, and other aspects deal with more serious domestic issues such as homelessness, domestic violence or the invisibility of carers, there is also a fun, at times bawdy, side to it.

Many of the dusters submitted in response to Vanessa's open call via Instagram @domesticdusters are bursting with humour and tongue in cheek remarks which poke fun at the legacy of housework that women often struggle to shake off. Never more so than with Vanessa's recent collaboration with the Profanity Embroidery Group (PEG) from Whitstable in Kent.

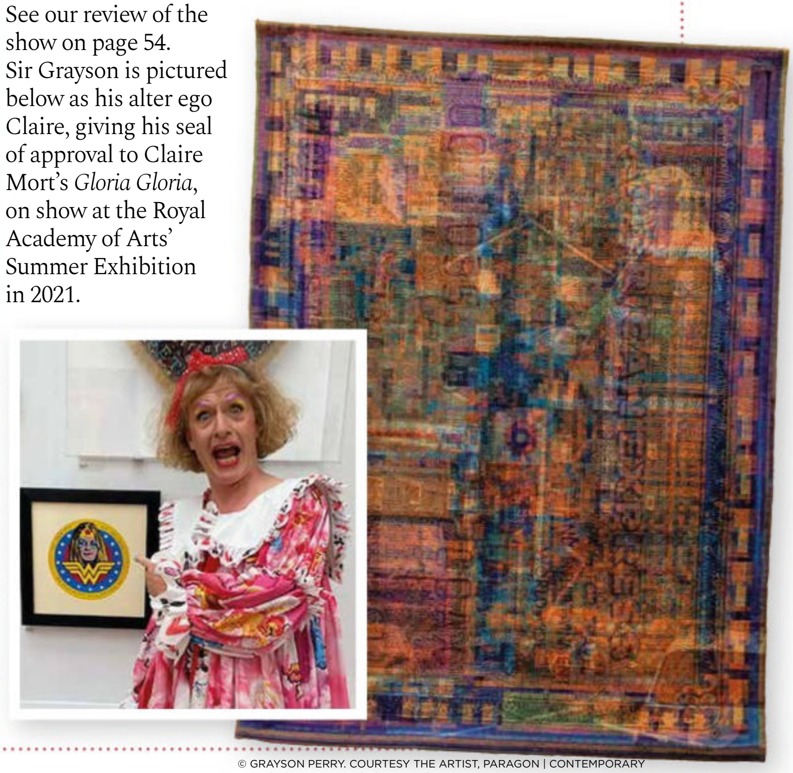
Early this year @domesticdusters collaborated with @pegwhistable on an open call for women to shake off the 'nice, quiet girl' image of embroidery by swearing their frustrations on a duster. The response has been 'hilariously shocking' with contributions arriving from the UK, Europe and even the US. You might catch the display at the Twelve Taps Gin Bar, Whitstable, in February. Alternatively, head to INSTAGRAM @DOMESTICDUSTERS

Arise Sir Grayson

Sir Grayson Perry has been knighted in King Charles III's New Year Honours List. The 62-year-old said it would not stop him being a rebel and that he was getting a new dress specially-designed for the ceremony. The writer, broadcaster and self-styled 'tranny potter' from Essex said he was delighted because the award was about his achievements with no regard to class.

Alongside being a ceramicist, Sir Grayson also creates a range of tapestries, including *Credit card, A13, Van Eyck, Micropressor*, 2022 (*pictured below right*), made for the 'normal life' theme of Grayson's Art Club: The Exhibition at the MAC, Birmingham until 16 April. See our review of the show on page 54.

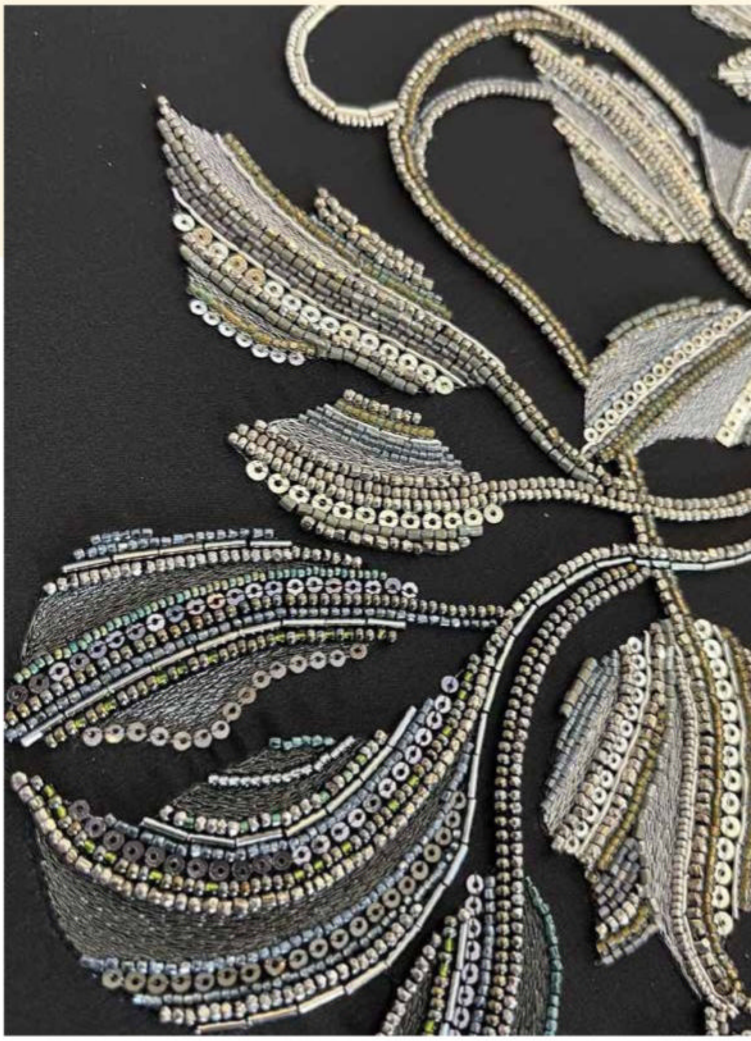
Sir Grayson is pictured below as his alter ego Claire, giving his seal of approval to Claire Mort's *Gloria Gloria*, on show at the Royal Academy of Arts' Summer Exhibition in 2021.



© GRAYSON PERRY. COURTESY THE ARTIST, PARAGON | CONTEMPORARY EDITIONS LTD AND VICTORIA MIRO

ones to watch

Meet two more of the eight graduates selected by the Embroiderers' Guild in the summer of 2022 as exciting prospects. The graduates received a grant and free exhibition space at the Knitting and Stitching Shows



✪ LINNEA LYNDON

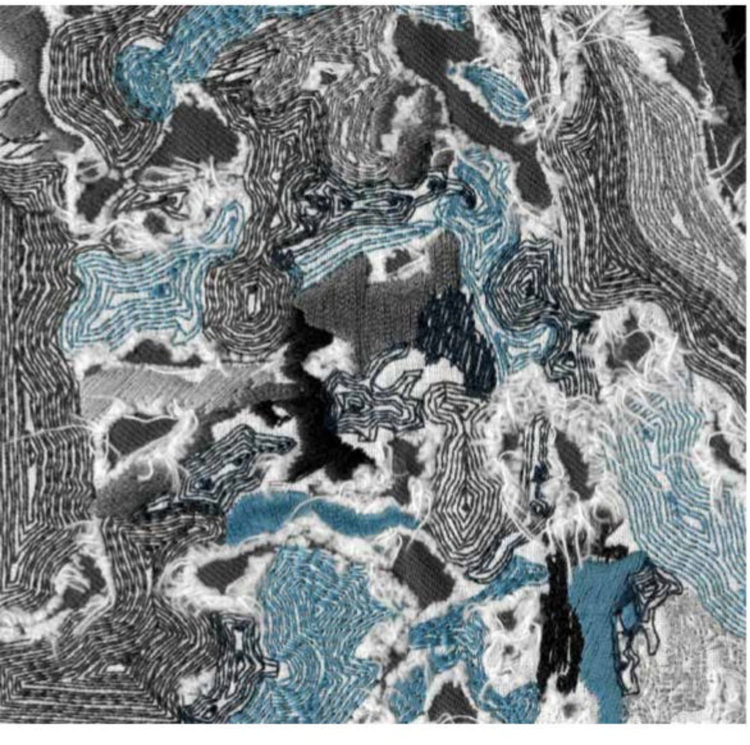
Linnea Lyndon is an embroidery designer and maker who has recently graduated from the Royal School of Needlework. Through her use of hand-embroidery, Linnea aims to articulate the subconscious workings that form her creative practice, using a range of materials and techniques to create haute couture pieces that stimulate imagination and memory. Linnea uses the tactile essence of embroidery to push the boundaries of the craft, incorporating a range of materials to create unique surfaces which are fulfilling for the senses.

Embroidery as a technique requires close attention to detail and quality. The artist naturally connects memory with interlocking layers of patterns, shapes and colours and sees her work as an immersive narrative of individuality. To further connect with memory and imagination, she frequently employs the use of found objects, the inclusion of which provides a constant unique platform on which to base her designs.

Linnea comments: 'I have developed a particular interest in collecting and using antique materials to push further the creative possibilities of my embroidery work. I find the individual material qualities of fabrics are especially prominent in antique textiles, each example being one of a kind, which can add new depth to a piece when used alongside traditional embroidery materials.'

Linnea adds: 'The boundless possibilities of hand-embroidery are the perfect medium for actualising an insight into the self, and in the future development of my practice, I aim to explore further the emotive possibilities of hand-embroidery in fashion.'

INSTAGRAM @LINNEA_EMBROIDERY



✪ ADRIAN WA

After completing A-levels in fashion and textiles, Adrian Wa attended a three-month intensive specialist foundation course at Central Saint Martins. What he learned on the course was enough to consolidate his interest in the art and he progressed to study fashion textiles: embroidery at the London College of Fashion.

Now, with a first-class honours degree in textile embroidery, Adrian works in the digital embroidery arena. He describes himself as a 'needle painter'. Adrian has always been curious about how different embroidery techniques can be used to convey emotions and moods. The artist comments: 'A piece of art should convey a feeling and reflect its creator's thoughts, which is what makes it unique.'

It is Adrian's belief that material and sensory perceptions create an emotional bond which helps store memories of the past. His overlapping twisted fringes and layers of velvet stitch, with rough fringes, create an interaction with the viewer. He believes his embroideries can act as a memory trigger, with their contrasts in materials and techniques.

Through embroidery's tactile qualities and visual memory, the artist seeks to maintain traces of his presence by using expressive stitches, including rough finishing and ripple patterns.

Previous exhibitions include the Knitting and Stitching Shows at Alexandra Palace and Harrogate. Currently, he works as a freelance embroidery designer and receives commissions from clients. He has also co-founded embroidery-focused fashion brand Mizzle Copse.

INSTAGRAM @ADRIAN.WA

COLOUR RUSH

Covid lockdowns persuaded Willemien Downes-Wechgelaer it was time to show her true colours

Willemien Downes-Wechgelaer's brightly-hued embroideries bring something of a colour rush to the head. 'I like the impact of colour,' she says. 'I can look at a Mark Rothko, just one colour on canvas, and I find it fascinating.' Many people find Rothko's large blocks of colour overwhelming but Willemien's growing passion for Modern Art has influenced her kaleidoscopic colour combinations which are faintly reminiscent of the Op Art movement, although there are no optical illusions here. The heady intoxication is created by the compelling juxtaposition of colour and shape.

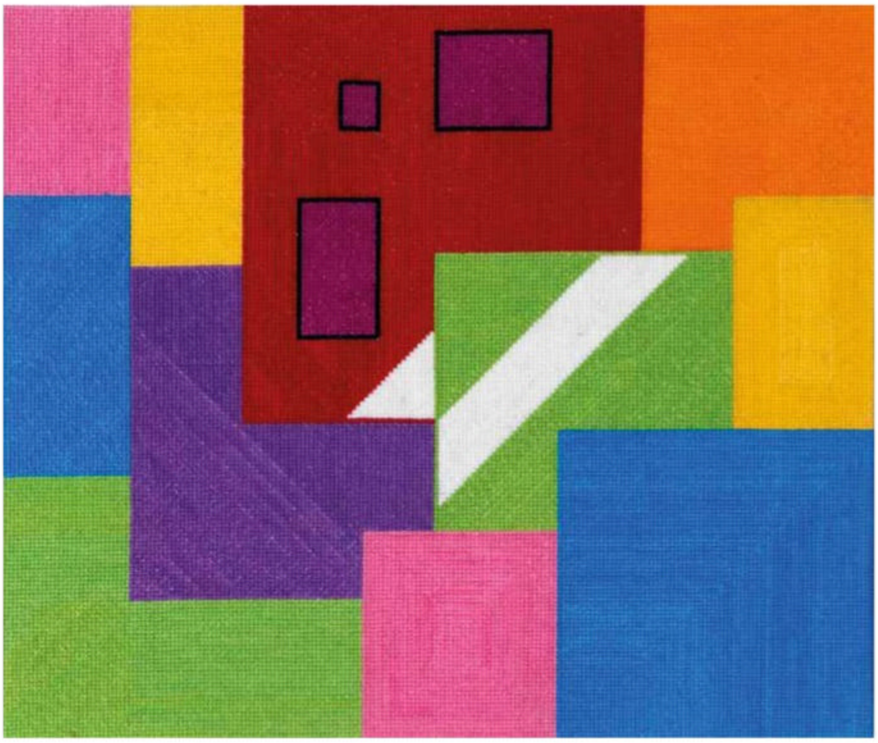
Willemien's love of embroidery goes all the way back to elementary school. She still has her very first artwork, two textile rabbits surrounded by stitches. Formally trained via a four-year City & Guilds course, from 1997 to 2001, where at least on some occasions the artist had to use nuanced hues, Willemien has become something of a primary colourist.

'I love being creative and playing with colours. I like to offset bright colours with some 'vile' colours which make you think, 'Help! Where are my sunglasses!' but it gives me a certain excitement.'

The artist uses cross stitch in creating nearly every image. Cross stitch is often thought of as that basic stitch students learn early on and then progress from, but it is not without its proponents. 'I think cross stitch is so clean and neat and precise and you can still play with it. Cross stitch didn't feature an awful lot when I was studying for my City & Guilds but it has remained my favourite. I work with different slants of cross stitch which gives the pieces a clear texture.'

During Covid lockdowns the artist began working from patterns, but found she couldn't concentrate. 'A pattern was like a restrictive regime and during lockdowns you were restricted with where you could walk and drive. I couldn't stand restrictions with my favourite pastime; I needed personal freedom at home. I followed my own designs so I could be free in my head and free with my stitching, to take it in any direction I fancied at that moment.'

> **'I like to offset bright colours with some 'vile' colours which make you think, 'Help! Where are my sunglasses!''**



Creating original designs also led to a more harmonious home life: 'The nice thing is that because I don't need to count stitches from a pattern, I can also communicate with my husband in the evenings!'

Willemien finds the process of making thrilling. She begins her pieces directly on the Aida weave, without sketches, and has no default starting point. 'Depending on the piece, I start from the sides, the bottom or the top; I rarely start in the middle. My designs emerge from everyday emotions, feelings and events, which give me ideas for pattern, shape, colour, comparison, depth and juxtaposition.' She seeks to completely cover the Aida weave, describing it as 'not the most attractive fabric to look at'.

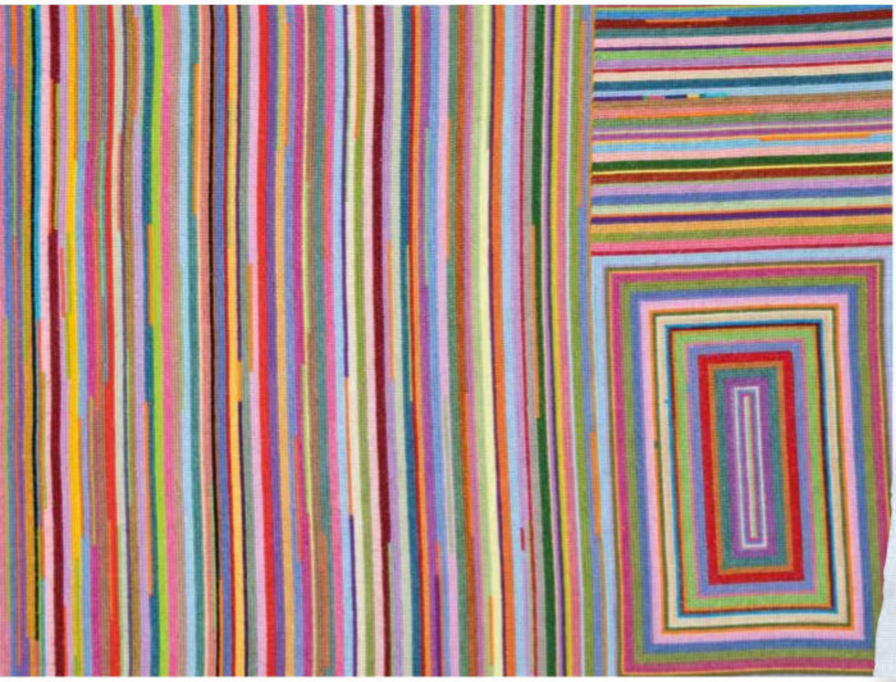
The first pieces she worked on during lockdowns were *Fear* and *Reluctance*, which measure about 45cm square. 'They took me about three to four months but I go about it systematically, by working out how many stitches there will be overall. One had 62,000 stitches so I worked out if I did so many stitches a day, how many weeks or months it would take me.'

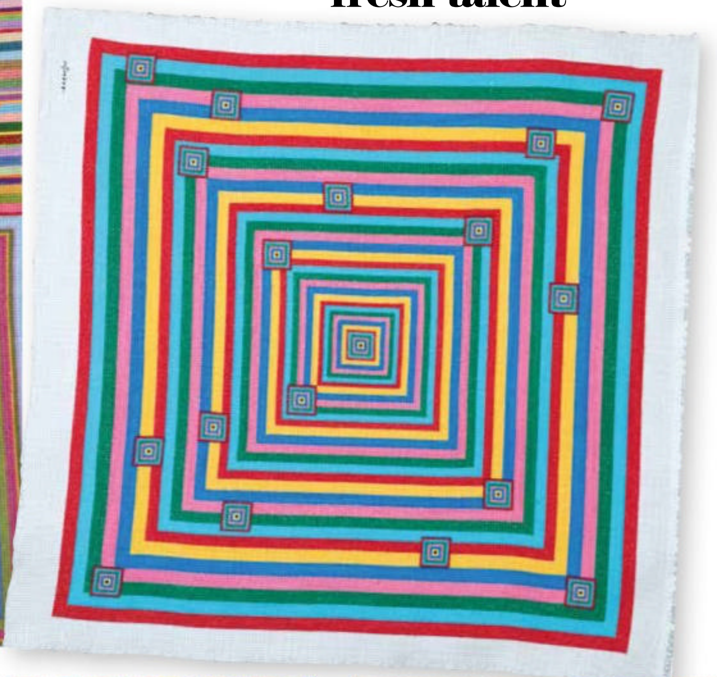
In 2009, Willemien had a sampler called *Is it Art?* selected for the Royal Academy of Arts' Summer Exhibition, playing on the general perception of textile art (as a craft). She says: 'I know that [Sir] Grayson Perry had to fight very hard to get pottery accepted as art and, of course, he also designs tapestries, some of them big enough to cover the Great Bed of Ware in the Victoria and Albert Museum.' Although the world has moved on from 2009, Willemien states: 'Embroidery is not considered an art yet.'

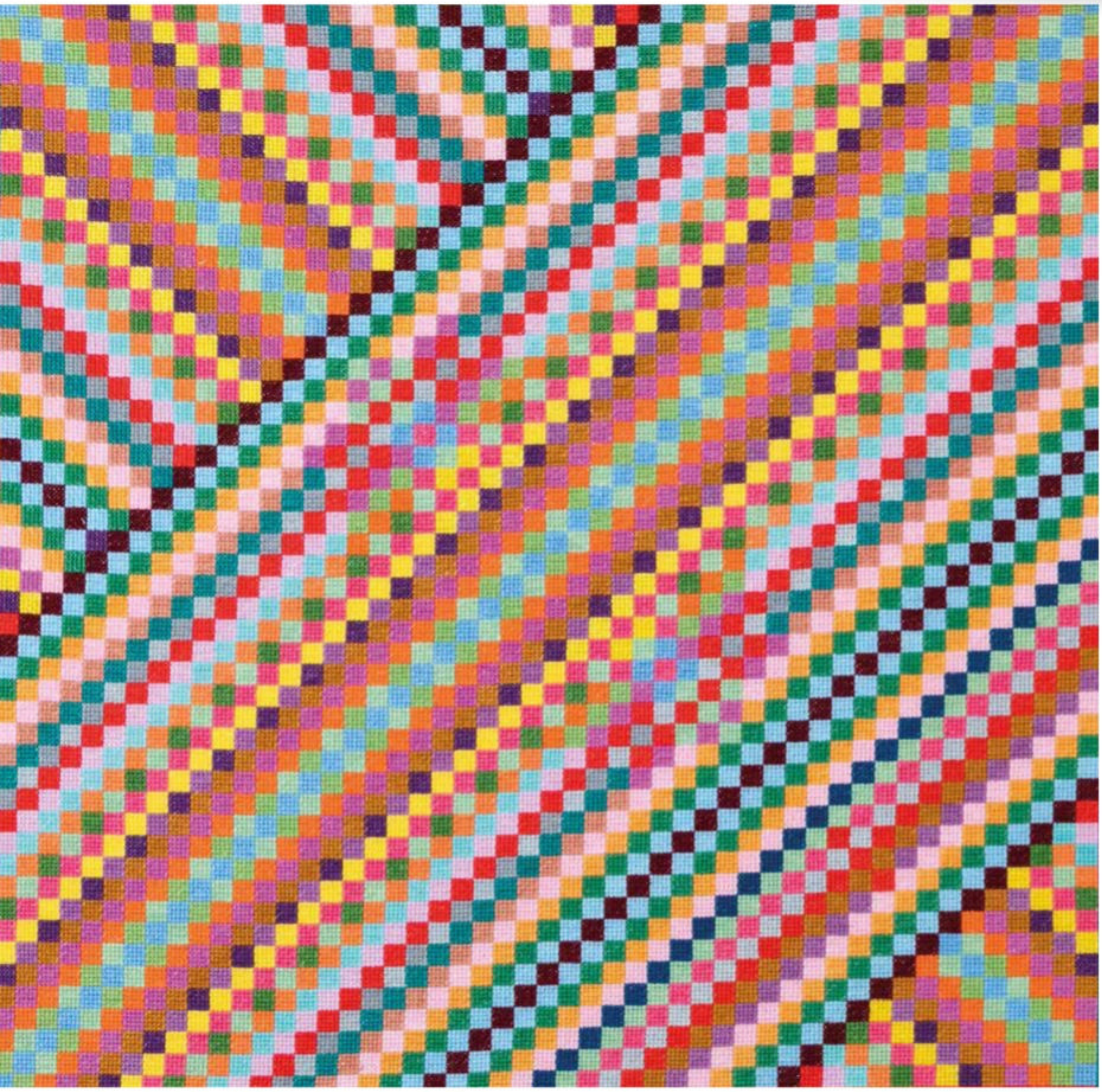
The artist, who is now a Royal Academy of Arts patron, will be submitting two pieces to the Summer Exhibition and has her fingers crossed they will be selected.

The sheer energy of these works, the enthusiasm for the art of embroidery, the freeness of the use of colour and the desire to jolt the viewer out of their comfort zone marks out this artist's works. As Willemien herself says, 'I hope viewers are intrigued.'

Claire Waring







Willemien Downes-Wechgelaer's series of works created during Covid lockdowns represent her changing emotions during that time, with *Fear*, this page, left; Confusion, top left; and *Reluctance*, top right.
Her artwork *Reflection*, completed later on in the pandemic, is pictured on the opposite page.
Fear and *Reluctance* are larger-scale works, measuring about 45cm square, and mostly created with DMC cotton on 14 count Aida fabric;
Above, Willemien Downes-Wechgelaer is pictured examining some of her work in the photographer Nick Gregan's studio

ALL PHOTOS COPYRIGHT NICK GREGAN

HOME THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD

Gabriel and Fernanda are two artists who have built their artistic practice around their home

■ Presented by Canopy Collections and fresh to the UK art scene are contemporary Mexican duo Maria Fernanda Camarena and Gabriel Rosas Alemán. Together for six years as a couple and four years as an artistic partnership, they offer an innovative take on artistic life, homing in on their talents as hosts. A visit to their exhibition at The Wing Gallery in London (until the end of January) was a chance to walk into their world and experience their interpretation of guests' visits to their home in Tepoztlán, a town they both love. Gabriel explains: 'When family and friends come to our house, it is a really important time for us. We prepare rooms and meals and give them tours of the house. We wanted to bring this dynamic to the studio.'

In 2019 Gabriel was asked to do a solo exhibition at Zapopan Museum in Guadalajara. Gabriel involved Fernanda, and with the exhibition deadline pushed into the future because of Covid-19 lockdowns, the couple began to reflect on their partnership and explore the theme of 'home'. They follow a long string of artists who drew inspiration from their home during lockdowns, but perhaps few have created an exhibition so full of impact.

Both have artistic backgrounds. Gabriel was working with textiles and sculpture and also writing before the couple got together, while Fernanda went to art school but had been working as a studio manager/production assistant/archivist. They were based in Mexico City.

Eager to convey the feeling of their new home, they first thought of curtains in evocative warm and earthy tones. Now, their use of textiles has been translated into huge panels of fabric bearing rich colour. One triptych is seven-metres-wide. Gabriel says: '"We realised colour was a practical way to extend the feeling of a warm atmosphere and as part of our initial research we looked in our pantry at the ingredients we were using for cooking, so you have this connection with our kitchen and this sense of receiving.'

They knew they wanted a dramatic dyed textile background, but the plan was to create layers of colour over the top of it using an acrylic medium and loose pigments. Fernanda says: 'I was anxious, thinking "Is this going to work?", but I think we made it work. We will always go back to these colours but slowly bring in two or three more colours, so our work is evolving but at the same time, still feels really close to the origin.'

During the creative process, Fernanda started to review her collection of small notebooks, which were brimful of little drawings she describes as 'very private notes'. Some of those 'very private' drawings influenced the couple's monumental textile works.

In terms of the shapes on these textile panels, it was important to the duo that they maintained an abstract language. Gabriel explains: 'I like the vocabulary of form with geometry. With the sphere, there are open possibilities for interpretation. Everyone can relate to these forms. But I think now we are moving forward from geometry and little by little the forms are becoming organic with this sense of fluidity, but they are still very abstract. Somehow composition, form, colour and material are a translation of the relationships Fernanda and I have.'

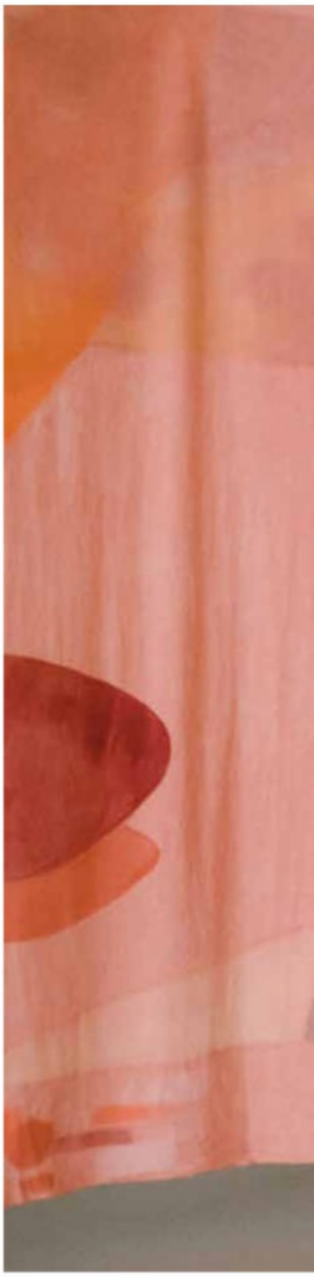
Their first show in Mexico was titled Celeste, which they also adopted for their artistic partnership. Gabriel had been reading the book *Bluets* by American author Maggie Nelson, which he describes as 'an ode to the colour blue'. Fernanda explains: 'There's an anecdote in the book where the author worked in an orange-hued cafeteria. During the day she only saw orange but when she went to bed she dreamed of celestial blue.' The couple loved the celestial theme but invoke blue's complementary colour, orange, for their work. They also display copper objects, especially basins, within their show and enjoy the interaction they have with the textiles. 'Copper is a very adaptable material,' says Fernanda. 'It is something precious but it's also nice to use those precious objects as a part of daily life.'

One wonders how important the use of textiles is to them. The couple tell me: 'It's the base of everything.' Gabriel talks of the 'gentle' way that textiles can colour a gallery environment, while Fernanda adds: 'In conceptual terms we're creating large-scale work that could be a mural but as soon as it's on the textile it becomes flexible and that quality is really interesting to us because it changes the dynamic of the large scale paintings that we grew up seeing – the murals.'

Mexico has a long history of murals, with 'Mexican Muralism' referring to a government-run art project aimed at reunifying the country after the revolution. The three main political muralists were Diego Rivera, Jose Clemente Orozco and David Alfaro Siqueiros. The tradition of murals, however, goes as far back as 1500 BCE with the gifted artists of the Olmec civilisation. It is something the duo developed further for their exhibition in Austin, Texas, USA, which opens on 3 March. Gabriel explains: 'For the exhibition in Austin, we went deep into the mural experience of Mexico. We admire that practice but also want to adapt it to our way of living. But I think I feel more connected with the links between muralism and architecture and the artists or architects who developed murals in their own houses. I was very intrigued how living with this art every day could affect you.'

Gabriel is particularly influenced by the work of muralist Juan O'Gorman, whose works were on display at a home he built called Casa Cueva (no longer in existence) and Rufino Tamayo, a colourist muralist. In her study of the history of art, Fernanda has been drawn to the use of colour and natural motifs in Georgia O'Keefe's work and the paintings of American transcendentalist Agnes Pelton.

They both agree that each exhibition starts with an intimate understanding of the gallery space that is available



Gabriel, right, and Fernanda with their artwork *Palabras dulces y fuertes como aroma de orquídeas*, 2020

PHOTO BY VALERIA BROSS

to them. Their work for the show in Austin comprises a theatrical curtain that also functions as a forum or stage, complete with a bench so visitors can sit and view the work. They reference the process of weaving throughout this exhibition, which includes a programme of workshops and activities and an artists' book.

Celeste is a partnership that combines the pictorial with the architectural, creating a sense of ceremony in the gallery and with rich colour, a sense of harmony that speaks of a happy home over 5,000 miles away.

When the exhibition is over, the couple like the cost- and energy-efficiency of using textiles which can simply be rolled up and shipped to another country. Alas, Celeste's appearance in London was all-too-fleeting.

Claire Waring

HOST: Celeste is at The Contemporary Austin, Texas, USA, from 3 March to 20 August with a related programme of workshops and activities and an artists' book.

THECONTEMPORARYAUSTIN.ORG CUERPOCELESTE.MX

PHOTO BY OLLIE HAMMICK

QUEEN BEE ESME YOUNG

Inside *The Great British Sewing Bee* presenter's studio of 'ordered chaos'

ALONG WITH HER FRIENDS Judy Dewsbury, Melanie Herberfield and Willie Walter, Esme Young founded the 1970s punk fashion label Swanky Modes, notable for the infamous amorphous dress. Since then she's gone on to design iconic film costumes, such as the bunny girl outfit worn by Renée Zellweger in *Bridget Jones's Diary*, while also teaching pattern-cutting at her ex-college, Central St Martins. However, it was becoming a judge on BBC One's *The Great British Sewing Bee* in 2016 that has secured her as a household name.

For as long as she can remember Young has had a workshop, usually in shop basements, dotted around London. Her current one is in Hackney, which she has shared with three friends, all of whom are costume designers, for over 20 years. 'I think it was built by the council, it may have been the GLC. It was set up to encourage small businesses. There are architects, artists and designers and in fact one of my ex-students, Ashish, has a workshop there. It's got eight or maybe ten floors. The top floor has an amazing view of the city.'

Not covetous of privacy or indeed precious about her things, Young is happy sharing her workspace. 'I've worked with them for a long time and we're rarely there at the same time. And if I'm not there I don't mind if they push my cutting table over to the wall.' In fact, Young may be the most challenging one of the four. 'I do make a mess. And I think that irritates the people I share the workshop with,' she laughs, 'but I do try and sweep the floor at the end of the day, particularly if I'm pattern-cutting.'

Young confesses to being a hoarder, an admission made evident by the 'ordered' ('I do label things') chaos of her workshop. Firstly there's her archive of clothes, swamping several rails. 'There are clothes from Swanky Modes, clothes from my mum, clothes from friends – a load of old clothes basically.' Young laughs a warm, deep, throaty laugh: 'I do look at them and use them.' Then there are the boxes under her table. 'There are boxes and boxes of fabrics and haberdashery. I buy fabrics from wherever I go. I'm always thinking I should make something with them but then I think, I don't want to ruin the fabric.' Then there are the sewing books and patterns. Young's proclivity for hoarding extends beyond her workshop to her 'tiny, weeny flat' where she keeps her mother's perfume bottles and assortment of royal memorabilia, paint pots and her own collection of animal skulls. 'A cook, who was making soup or stew, gave me a boar's head. It's amazing and I've also got sheep and goats' heads... oh, and a snake's backbone. I wish I had its head too.'

Apart from a turquoise Mickey Mouse clock (which she can't remember buying) and an embroidery of the Queen that her father brought back from Iran, Young's workshop appears bereft of any personal objects other than the clothes. 'Basically, there's nowhere to put them.' Then she remembers the window ledge. 'There's a papier maché skeleton doll that I bought from Mexico and one of those cut-out dolls of Princess Diana that you put different dresses on. And a Chinese paper funeral shoe from China Town. Or was it New York? And I've got two Barbie dolls. There's Ken as a dentist and the other one is pregnant.'

Her workshop is a 40-minute walk from her flat, a journey during which Young often collects a coffee from nearby Broadway Market. 'I like walking through London. I did a lot of walking during Covid and I saw many things I'd never seen before.'

Relishing the 'little community' of the Hackney studios, Young is resolute: 'I never want to stop working, I have to say.'

Ellen Bell

Behind the Seams: My life in creativity, friendship and adventure **by Esme Young, £9.99, Blink Publishing, is in paperback in March.**

AN INDIGO SUMMER

Ellie Evelyn Orrell's *An Indigo Summer* is an evocative book about a mother and daughter's summer spent indigo dyeing in Wales while mourning their father and grandfather. The following is an extract

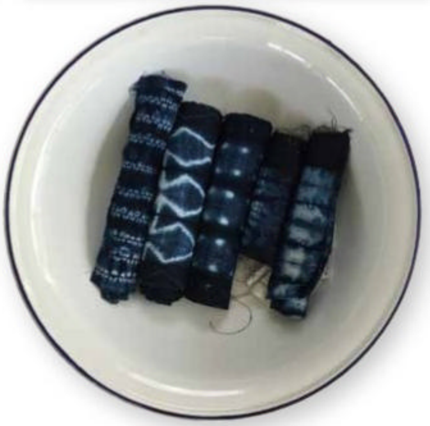
Rain pelts against the house, bouncing off the windows in shards of silver. The garden sings with relief as a week of dry August heat concludes with a downpour. Sheltered under the eaves of the woodshed, we watch as water runs in streams from furrows along the corrugated roof. Together, we lift the vat further into the woodshed and begin moving the already dipped indigo cloth inside, too, protecting it from the rainfall. There are too many swathes of damp cloth to fit inside the small woodshed and the remaining pieces hang heavily in saturated lines between the willow and pear tree. Summer is nearing its end, though our dyeing work is far from done.

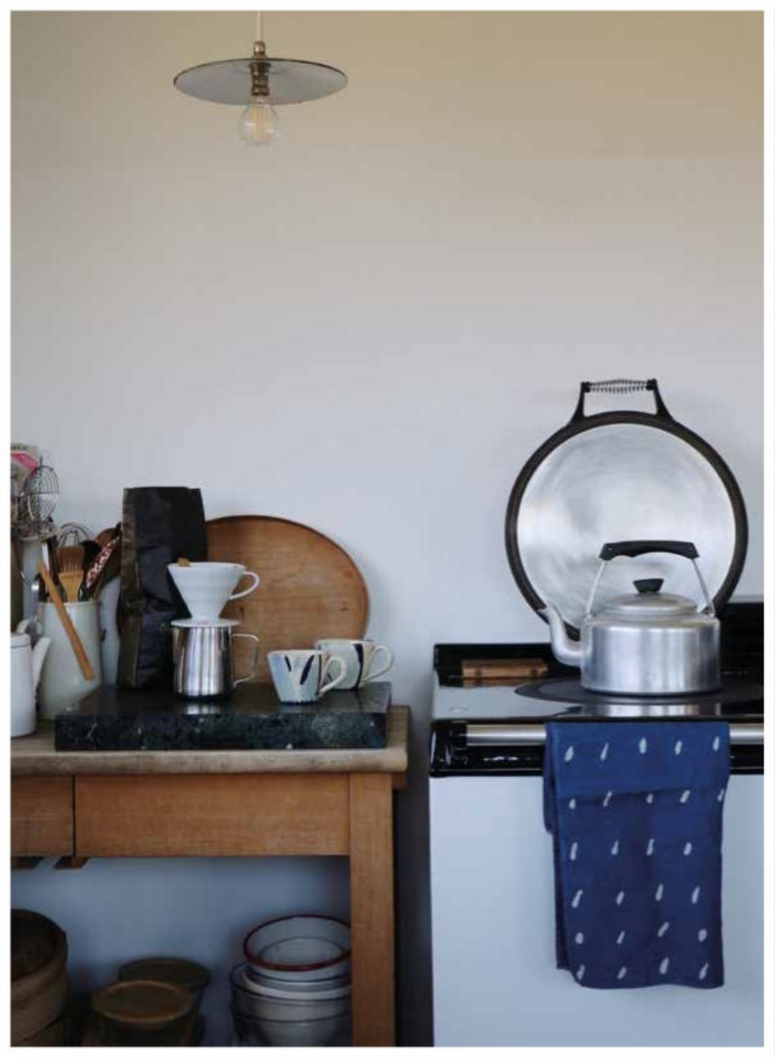
My mum darts up to the house, pulling from the porch the collection of umbrellas that has amassed there over the years. Some are vast, heavy-duty sails designed to keep a small huddle of people dry all at once; others are the rickety, short-handled folding kind that a gust of wind quickly inverts, leaving you tense and sodden for the duration of your inclement journey. She deftly puts each one up and arranges them in a jumble between the trees, building a tent to shelter the freshly dipped cloth. Once she's done this, she runs back to the house and returns with two raincoats. We pull them on and continue to attend to the pieces we've already dipped as they'll need at least four or five additional dips each before we can abandon our damp posts beside the indigo vat. The rain is cold and hard against our hands, but submerging cloth into the warm vat is a gentle respite. The showers continue to roll in and out over the course of the day, broken here and there by soft rays of sunshine.

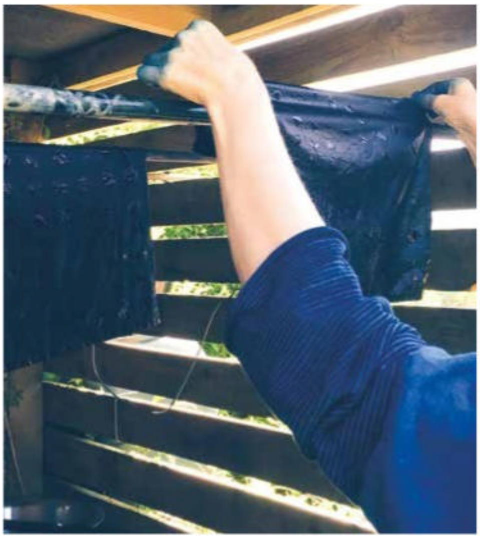
Rivers of blue don't course along the fabric as they had done in those first weeks of summer, but nor are there deep, uniform expanses of colour. I've come to realise that indigo doesn't produce flat, unrelenting shades of blue. There

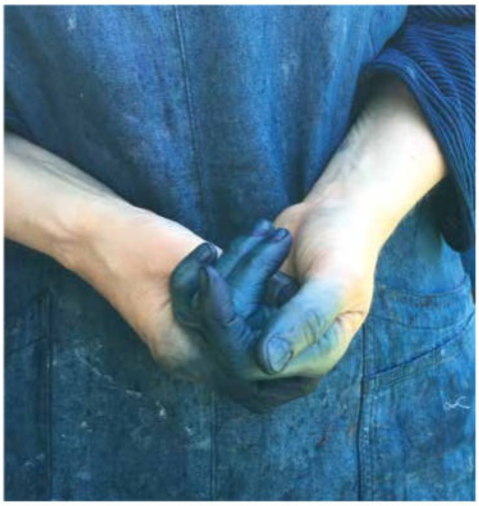
Opposite page: 'Over the course of the summer, which slipped past in a blur of indigo, I witnessed the indispensable roles art, creativity and nature have to play in our everyday lives.'

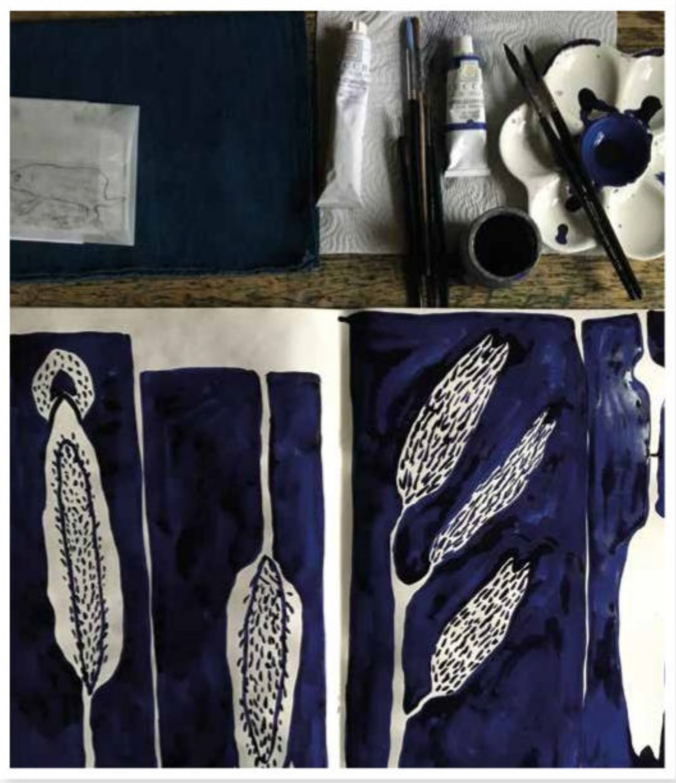
The book highlights quiet moments of contemplation shared between mother and daughter (pictured bottom left)

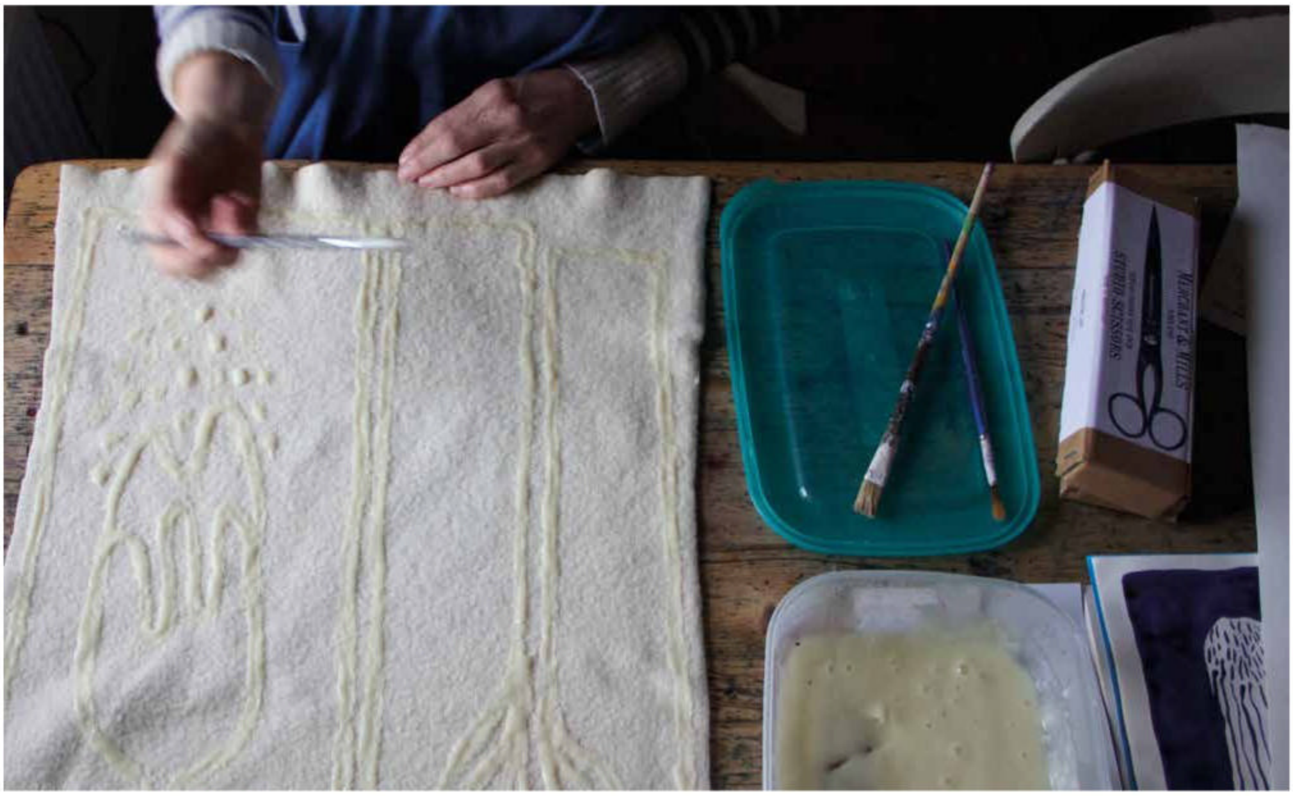


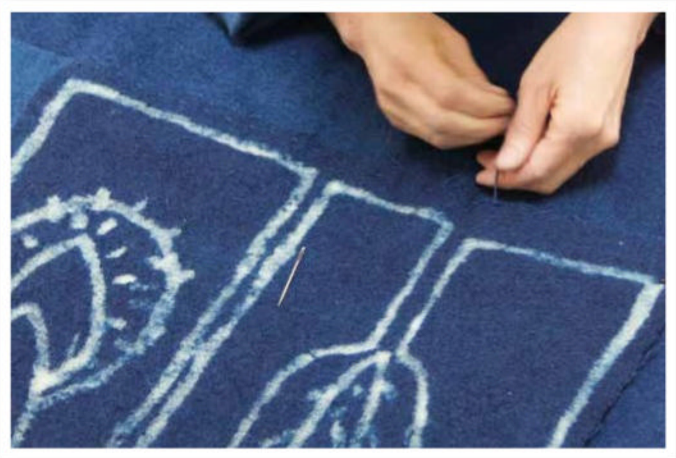












This page: Translating the pages of her sketchbook onto resist-dyed wool, Jeanette hand-paints rice paste directly onto the fabric, a technique called tsutsugaki in Japan

Opposite, clockwise from top left: The kitchen in their home in Wales; tsutsugaki test pieces being dyed; blue-stained hands from working with indigo; Jeanette's sketchbook drawings; blanket pieces hanging to dry

are soft gradations along the cloth, blues, greens and purples all dancing together. Some pieces have a kind of iridescence, a silver-like quality. Traditional West African dyers amplify this silver characteristic by hammering dyed cloth using wooden beaters in order to create a burnished surface. It is exceptionally unusual for two pieces of fabric – even if dyed on the exact same day and dipped the exact same number of times – to look the same. […] I watch as she moves surely through every step of the process, masterfully achieving exactly what it was she'd set out to do. Over the course of these months at home, I have witnessed a slow process of growth, such as she must have noticed in me over the course of many summers before.

Artist and writer, Ellie Evelyn Orrell, is the daughter of the artist Jeanette Orrell. Her book, An Indigo Summer, tells the story of how they are reunited in the small village of Betws Gwerful Goch in North Wales following the death of a father and grandfather. Ellie had returned from studying at university, while Jeanette had been studying the art of indigo dyeing in Japan. In this lyrical memoir, Orrell transports readers to their hillside garden, reflecting on a summer spent learning to work with indigo, and witnessing the power of creativity in moments of mourning and recovery. In it, she weaves together stories of resettling in a once-familiar landscape; the healing powers of art; the historical, mythological and present-day properties of indigo; and the presence of this indelible colour within the Welsh landscape.

ELLIE EVELYN ORRELL
AN INDIGO SUMMER

An Indigo Summer *by Ellie Evelyn Orrell is published by University of Wales Press' Calon imprint, £14.99, and is available now.*

the woven womb

REZIA WAHID TAKES MOTHERHOOD AS HER THEME FOR HER CURRENT EXHIBITION, WHICH IS WOVEN THROUGHOUT HER WORK

Since I was a baby I had watched my mother embroider. I remember occasions when my mother wouldn't be able to complete a pattern or several embroideries; she would invite my aunts or her friends over. They would work on them together over delicious traditional snacks and tea while I, my sisters and the other children would play. It was always fun and like a summer holiday.

My childhood played a significant role in developing and seeing beauty around me, spanning from the natural surroundings to the tactile, texture, pattern, colour and a holistic form of art being a way of life. I had access to almost all art forms apart from weaving. I had never seen a loom till I was studying at art college.

Running stitch, technique of the traditional kantha, shisha embroidery and French knots were my favourite embroidery techniques as a teenager.

I hadn't realised that my mother was creating art until my secondary school teacher Kim Clarke, who I am still in touch with, spoke about and taught us embroidery with such passion and enthusiasm. For my GCSE mock exam we had a question which asked us to respond to Picasso's *Weaping Woman*. I used mirror imagery to create a repeat, to deconstruct and manipulate. I then created a wall hanging with the mirror image technique. This is when I realised the power of embroidery: how it is more than a domestic form of craft, how my mother has been creating stories, how the forms of kantha embroidery educate us about a culture and history.

Although I work with yarns on a loom, which makes my work focus on technique, my projects and pieces are very much conceptual. I am drawn by the poetics of nature, my surroundings, experiences of my everyday life, literature, materiality, memory, history, mythology, diversity, identity, faith-spirituality, feminism, motherhood, equality and sometimes current issues.

I do believe that our art can be used to make a positive change or difference in the world. I started with telling the story of weaving – just weaving – as 25 years ago, when I began weaving, its history and how it is a form of art was unknown. I felt it was my responsibility to teach people about weaving. Then, over a decade ago, I felt quite invisible as a mother-weaver-artist so the feminist within me came out. I felt that story had to be told and the only way I could do this is by being absolutely true to my most inner self as an artist-mother.

The theme of my most recent body of work dancing in the womb is, of course, motherhood. The six very long lengths of woven cloths and their inlays describe individual inspirations collected, felt and seen during my pregnancies. Exhibited at Whitchurch Silk Mill in 2022, the pieces are at the Crafts Study Centre, Farnham till 13 May. The exhibitions bear witness to the resilience I had to show as a working artist-mother, disappearing for a period from exhibitions but still making.

From 2020 to 2022, the dancing in the womb series was captured in its various stages by professional photographer Paul Tucker, from setting up to how I employed the French knot embroidery technique in order to capture the essence of my daughter pushing her limbs while inside the womb creating bumps in my belly. My book, *Rezia Wahid: dancing in the womb*, has an introduction by Professor Catherine Harper (deputy vice-chancellor of the University of Creative Arts) and essays by the late Professor Simon Olding (director of Crafts Study Centre), and Hettie Judah (senior art critic on *The i*.)

The book and exhibition at the Crafts Study Centre are dedicated to Simon Olding. He was a very important supporter of my work, mentor, guide and a dear friend. During lockdown I had many conversations with him about my lack of visibility as a weaver-artist and it was those dialogues that led to the essay. It became very important to me to have my book published while he could still see it.

REZIAWAHID.COM

Rezia Wahid: dancing in the womb is at the Crafts Study Centre, Farnham, till 13 May.

PHOTO: PAUL TUCKER

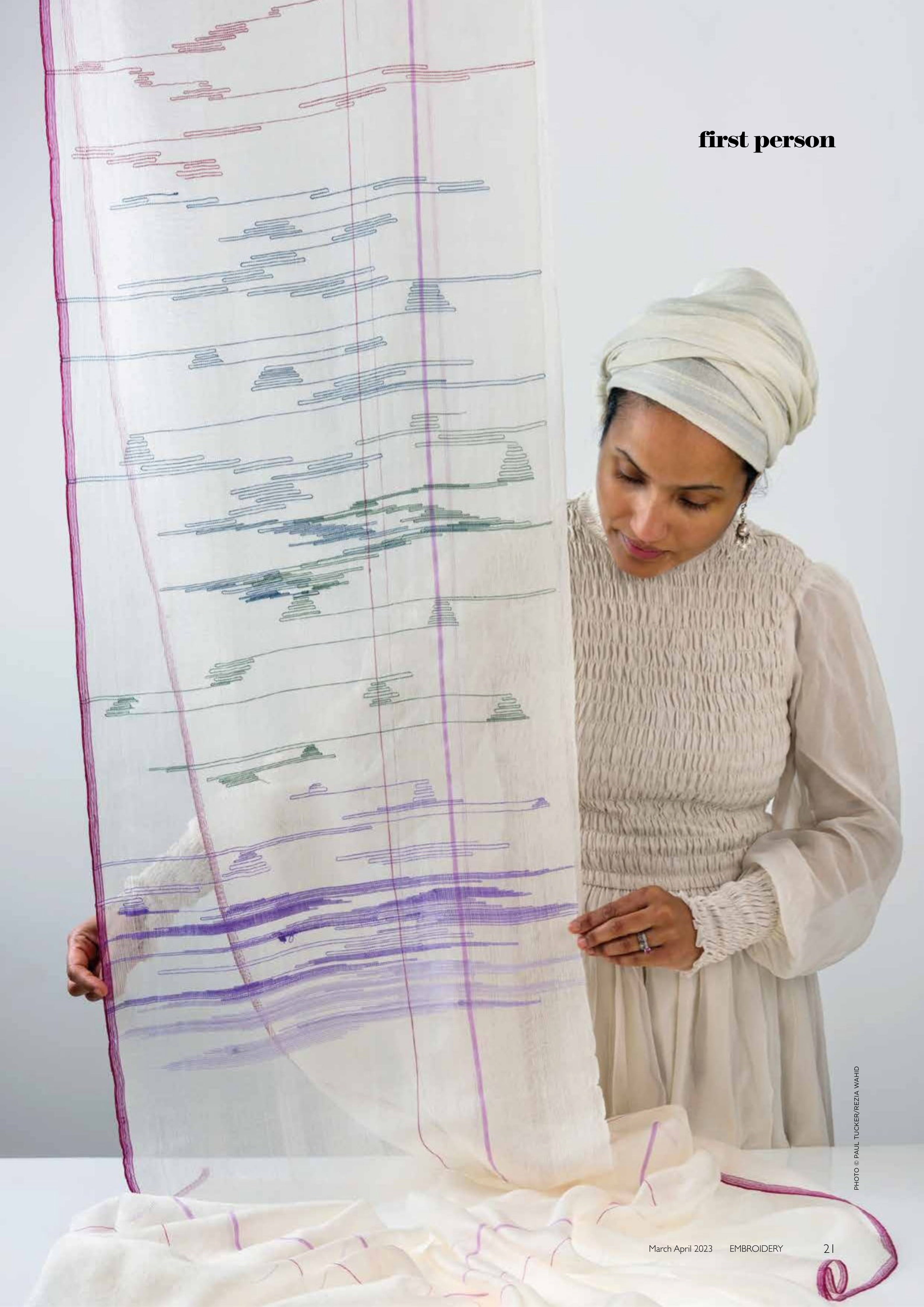


PHOTO © PAUL TUCKER/REZIA WAHID

AVAXHOME -

the biggest Internet portal, providing you various content: brand new books, trending movies, fresh magazines, hot games, recent software, latest music releases.

Unlimited satisfaction one low price
Cheap constant access to piping hot media
Protect your downloadings from Big brother
Safer, than torrent-trackers

18 years of seamless operation and our users' satisfaction

All languages
Brand new content
One site

AVXLIVE.ICU

AvaxHome - Your End Place

We have everything for all of your needs. Just open https://avxlive.icu

PRISM TEXTILES

Meet the artists of Prism Textiles and better still, enjoy their diverse works at their forthcoming exhibition

How did the group start?

Originally called The Prism Group of Textile Artists, the group was established in 1998 by the late Julia Caprara. Exhibitions were held annually at the Mall Galleries in London as an important focus for the work of students and tutors from Opus School of Textile Arts*.

In 2010 Prism established itself as an independent, member-run exhibiting group, which retains its original focus on showcasing high-quality textile art and craftsmanship. Prism currently has a membership of 70 UK and international artists.

*Opus was initially founded in 1983 as Stitch Design, by Barbara Marriott, Julia Caprara and Alex Caprara. Later, under the direction of Julia and Alex, the school grew in reputation as one of the UK's leading textile art schools, specialising in teaching stitched textiles and art and design by distance learning to a worldwide student group.

Is there an overriding principle that binds you together?

Cohesion comes from the annual exhibition, which is our main focus. The title is chosen a year in advance by our members and informs the work we create for it. Diversity in our members' art practices makes the exhibition exciting, combining a range of contemporary textile-inspired fine art works.

Where and when do you meet?

As our membership is international, we don't meet in person regularly. Our AGM and members' day each year is a chance to see the exhibition and catch up with everyone. Web conferencing has allowed us to hold regular meetings which means all our members can play an active role in the group.

Do members share practice tips?

For the past two years we have run a virtual collaboration over the summer months which our members can join. This allows members to meet each other and chat about their practice.

Some members also meet up in person in their local area and have online 'crit' groups to share ideas and support. Some members also collaborate on larger scale pieces of work for our exhibitions.

Are there any important dates in the group's calendar?

The most important dates in our calendar relate to our annual exhibition and for 2023 this is from 20 April to 1 May. An important ethos of Prism is that all members take part in stewarding the exhibition, so our visitors can ask questions and chat about the work.

What has been the most memorable moment in the group's history?

We think all of our exhibitions are memorable but the founding of Prism as an independent group in 2010 was certainly a red letter day.

Are you open to new members and if so, how can artists join?

We usually have an open call for new members annually and in 2023 this will coincide with our exhibition in April/May.

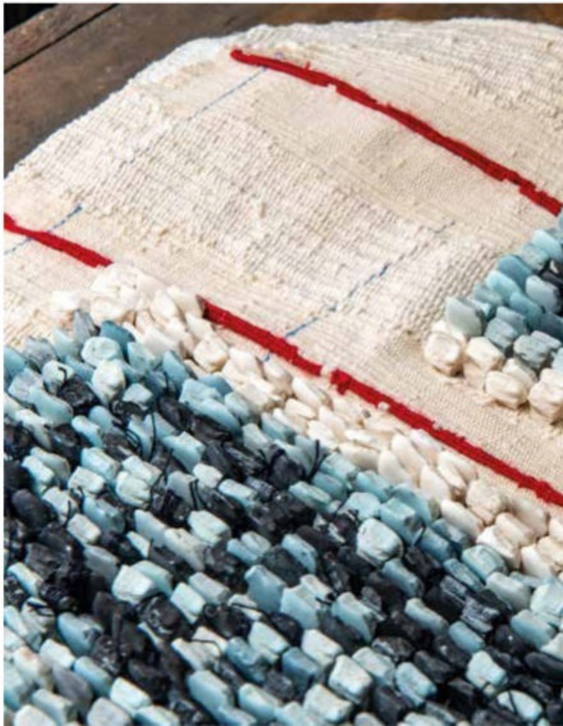
You can find out more about this through our website and social media. We also have a newsletter which you can sign up for on our website.

WWW.PRISMTEXTILES.CO.UK

EMAIL PRISMTEXTILESGROUP@GMAIL.COM

FOLLOW PRISM ON FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM, AND TWITTER @PRISMTEXTILES

PHOTO BY MAT DALE



Clockwise from top left:

Harbouring by Hayley Mills-Styles, inspired by beach walks

Warped Animals by Anna Granberg, mixed media

Two Loose Boards and Mainly Hidden by Wolfgang Woerner

Hedge to Hedge by Jacqueline Adkins, inspired by Kent

The Expedient Lie by Jo Coombes explores text

No Country for Gastropods by Linda Pearl Izan

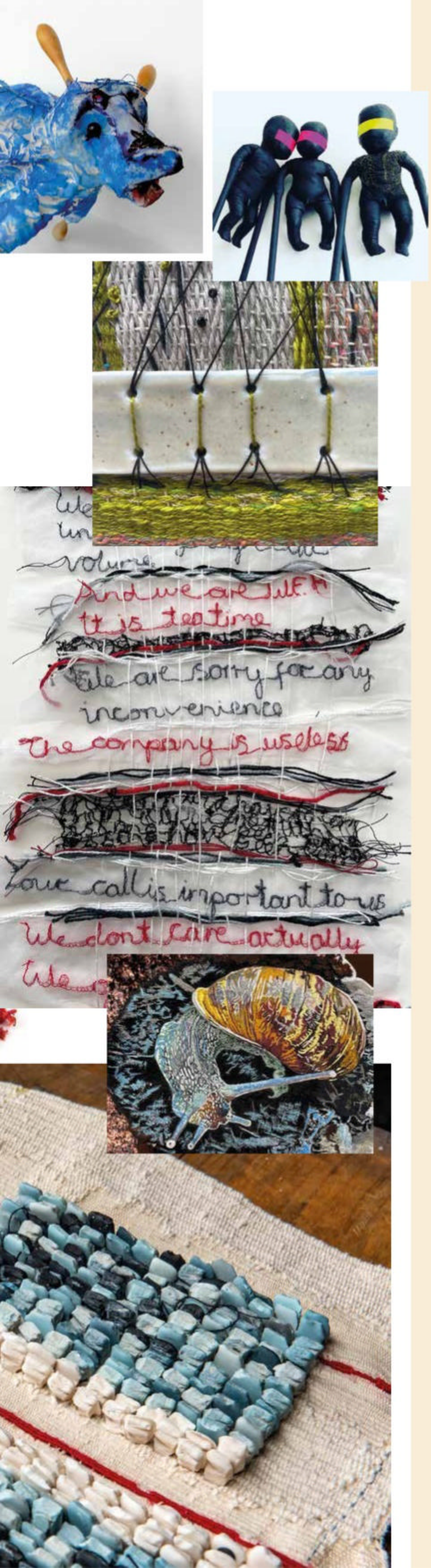
Peg Plan Study (II) by Jane Walkley

Blood Moon by Maria Walker

PHOTO BY ELAINE BOLES

Remains of the Sea by Willeke Klaassen

PHOTO BY MAT DALE



EXHIBITION NOTES

It's all go for members of Prism Textiles as they prepare for their exhibition Warped at the Art Pavilion in Mile End, London, at the end of April.

In a world where the media is often blamed for creating a warped view of reality through fake news and manipulated images, the title Warped might suggest an agenda. This is not the case. The theme is more about investigating what the term means to each artist, resulting in a range of both challenging and sensitive artworks for their latest exhibition.

Investigating place...

After the pandemic prevented travelling, people became more aware of their surroundings. Prism members Hayley Mills-Styles, Jane Walkley and Jacqueline Adkins have been inspired by the places they live and work to create sculptural textiles for the exhibition.

Warping is the process of moving a boat by hauling on a rope attached to a stationary object ashore. *Harbouring* is Hayley's response to her walks by Scarborough Harbour, collecting found objects and imagery of fishing nets, rusted metal and nautical knots. Each of the digitally embroidered rings is taken from Hayley's drawings and photographs of the harbour, studies of the moorings from fishing and tourist vessels.

Inspired by the textile archive at the historic Sunnybank Mills in Leeds, Jane 'celebrates the lives of mill workers, linking memory, materiality, and a shared connection to a well-loved place'. Her tapestry woven piece *Peg Plan Study (II)* uses jesmonite casts from a decommissioned industrial loom to create a textured surface within the cotton, linen and wool threads, reminiscent of a peg plan.

Jacqueline's work *Hedge to Hedge* was inspired by the traditional technique of weaving hedges in the Kent countryside where she lives. She has combined porcelain and woven threads to create a contemporary interpretation of this traditional craft.

Environmental concerns…

As the climate crisis dominates the media, Prism members Linda Pearl Izan, Willeke Klaasen and Anna Granberg have used their position as artists to highlight their individual concerns about this global issue. Linda's work is a direct response to her anger when her neighbours replaced their lawn with artificial grass. Her challenging printed and embroidered artwork *No Country for Gastropods* uses images of the humble earthworm and snail to draw attention to 'the madness and warped logic of artificial grass, which creates a dead environment where nothing can flourish.'

Dutch artist Willeke collects what she calls 'wondrous waste' from her local beaches, and has used it to make *Remains of the Sea*, a work which questions the effect this waste has on the environment.

Immersed in the beauty of her native Sweden, Anna is acutely aware of the precarious balance of nature brought on by excess consumerism. Her response has been to 'create new species of animals, warped and never seen before' from mixed media and lace bobbins, *Warped Animals from a Warped World*.

Human experience…

Maria Walker and Wolfgang Woerner both use their own experience of being human as inspiration for their mixed media artwork.

Maria's visceral twisting sculpture *Blood Moon* explores the bodily aspects of womanhood through the visual metaphor of blood. She combines her abstract textile sculptures with household objects to reinforce her feminist narratives. Maria believes that 'human emotions are difficult to articulate and that art can provide an emotional understanding and succeed where language fails'.

Wolfgang is a German-British artist who grew up in a culture that subscribed to the notion that what happens behind closed doors should stay hidden. He uses his art to uncover/discover a narrative about how he experiences the world. Wolfgang's mixed media sculptural artwork *Between Two Loose Boards and Mainly Hidden* consists of three talismans which embody pairs of contradictory aspects of his personality.

Jo Coombes has used her background as a speech and language therapist to inform her artwork. *The Expedient Lie* explores how individuals and companies 'manipulate language and the real meaning of their words with sugar-coated phrases.'

Prism Textiles returns to the Art Pavilion in Mile End, London E3 4QY with their latest exhibition Warped from 20 April to 1 May.

PHOTOS BY REBECCA DEVANEY AND KRYSTAL KENNEY PHOTOGRAPHY

PERLES
en bois
5€

TUFFÉ (Sarthe)
PASTILLES

BRILLANTE
8
COTON PERLÉ BRILLANTE
5
10 Pelotes de 10 Gram.
487
6

ENTRESOL
AU VER A SOIE
ASCENSEUR

April in Paris

Rebecca Devaney, a former haute couture embroiderer in Paris ateliers, now spends her time conducting tours of the city's remarkable haberdasheries, dating back to 1827

REBECCA DEVANEY WAS 18 when she began harbouring what she refers to as 'an extremely romantic idea of embroidering in Paris'. Born in a village outside Dublin into a literary family ('My grandmother owned the village bookshop'), Devaney describes herself as growing up with 'my head in books, but I was always interested in art. I loved beauty.' However, it wasn't until studying for a degree in art and design education that she began to experiment with textiles. 'I fell in love with the fine art approach to textiles. I remember being introduced to the sampling process and I was, "Oh my gosh, I can just play around with fabric and stitches and paper."'

Scrolling through her website, Devaney's gift for narrative, scene-setting and sense of detail is evident. 'If I hadn't done art I would've studied English and English literature and also history. I absolutely loved European and Irish history.' She attributes her skills as a storyteller to her years as a teacher in Ireland. 'Teaching art for me was all about instilling a love and appreciation of art and art history in teenagers, often through storytelling.' She recalls taking a group of 18-year-old girls on an Impressionist art trip to Paris. 'We were standing outside a boulangerie waiting to see Monet's *Waterlilies* and I told them to imagine back a hundred years where women would've been passing by in horse-drawn carriages. I could see them visualising this, remembering the details they'd seen in TV costume dramas. It really stayed with me.'

Devaney's undergraduate tutors had been dismissive about her intention of studying embroidery at Paris's L'Ecole Lesage. 'You know, you won't enjoy this much,' they said, 'and you don't need it, you can just develop your own techniques.' Then, nine years later, during her MFA in design and textile artefact, which she completed in 2015, Devaney began researching fashion and design theory. 'I'd spend all my time in the library in Dublin among their extremely

> ‘THEY DON’T EXPECT TO SEE THE ORIGINAL FURNITURE IN A HABERDASHERY THAT OPENED IN 1827. IT’S SO OVERWHELMING, WITH ALL THOSE COLOURS, TEXTURES, TONES AND SMELLS’

small collection of 19th century fashion books. It sharpened my resolve to go to Paris. I’d been trying to recreate the effects of haute couture embroidery techniques in my textile art and what I actually wanted to do was to learn the techniques and develop them.’

With a rudimentary knowledge of embroidery (‘You know, French knots and satin stitch’) Devaney recollects the Lesage teachers being shocked by her ‘very fine art approach’ (‘That’s not a French knot!’). It was hard going. ‘Oh, my gosh, I didn’t know what I’d signed up for at all.’ Opting to do the professional training, with its 150 hours of class time spread over six months, Devaney was embroidering 14 hours a day, seven days a week. ‘I embroidered all day long, because it was sequential; if you didn’t complete the set of stitches by the next class you couldn’t continue. I mean the pressure was just… and it was all taught in French.’ Spurred on by a mixture of perfectionism and single-mindedness, Devaney completed the course, and having acquired a reputation, was soon hired as a contract embroiderer for ateliers supplying fashion houses like Dior, Chanel and Givenchy. With tight deadlines set by collection launches, it was highly stressful work. ‘You’re working on these beautiful things under massive pressure with somebody behind you going “five minutes, four minutes, three minutes.” And any mistake, you get a tap on the shoulder and you’re fired.’

In line with France’s still rather outmoded attitude to craft versus art (‘Trained at technical rather than art school, embroiderers don’t learn how to draw’) the pay is woeful. ‘I know that the embroiderers I worked with take pride in what they do, but pride doesn’t pay the rent.’ After two years of subsisting, Devaney knew something had to change.

In between contracts, Devaney had spent her time poring over Paris’s Bibliothèque Forney’s immense archive of books on fashion and embroidery, becoming more and more fascinated by the stories of the needle workers. Known as ‘midinettes’, they ‘came from the poor areas of Paris, Montmartre and Belleville, and they were really revolutionary, really powerful in the world of haute couture. They’re never talked about, and yet there are statues of them in many of Paris’s parks.’

The desire to unravel, and indeed share, the mystery of these untold histories and the secrecy surrounding them became something of an obsession with Devaney. And it wasn’t just the tacit nature of the women’s tales that intrigued her but the almost clandestine world of the haberdasheries that supplied the industry. ‘I remember the day clearly. I was in my studio with all my books laid out in front of me. I was googling where all the fashion houses were based in and around the Rue de la Paix and then all the embroidery studios about a ten to 20 minute walk away, and it was the geography of it. I saw the eco-system and all those midinettes running between the stores and the ateliers.’ Devaney’s Textile Tours of Paris was born.

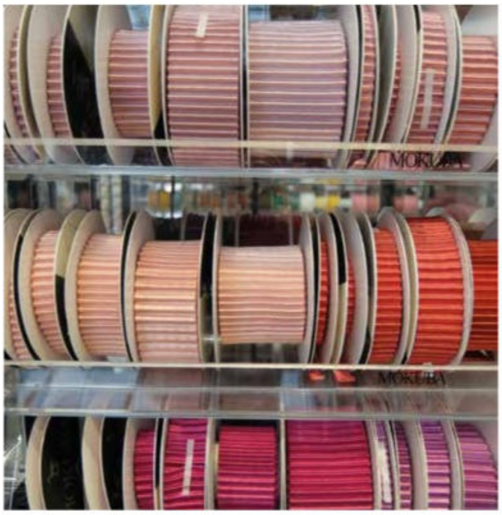
Getting the haberdashers to agree to host the tours was her first hurdle. ‘In Ireland you could say I’m going to launch a lead balloon and they’d say “That’s great. Brilliant. Good luck!” Whereas in Paris, I’d say: “I’m going to bring the world to your haberdashery, present its history and its craft” and they’d be dumbfounded. One woman, Madame Bouquet, who is now the star of the show – refused, saying no, no, she was too shy. But when I introduced her to one of the ladies on a tour as ‘The Queen of Needlepoint’ she just blossomed.’ Devaney’s delight in the way in which these haberdasheries conduct their trade – the face-to-face attention, the care spent finding the exact button or colour of a thread and the dreamy, sumptuous antiquity of their shops’ environments – is utterly infectious. ‘I’ve had people crying with joy on the tours,’ she says, ‘‘especially if they’re from the New World, because they don’t expect to see the original furniture in a haberdashery that opened in 1827. It’s overwhelming, with all those colours, textures, tones and smells.’

Her second hurdle was the timing. Launching her tours in September 2019, the pandemic and ensuing lockdown were about to happen. ‘I had groups, textile holiday companies and individuals contacting me. It started off with two or three people on a Friday morning and by March 2020 I had full groups and the haberdashers’ saying “Gosh, this is working!”’

Lockdown came but she survived: ‘I started doing online embroidery courses.’ Devaney also began researching and putting together a series of embroidery kits, provocatively entitled Samplers of Seduction, sourcing materials and tools from the haberdasheries and craftspeople she’d encountered both on the tours and during her time as an haute couture embroiderer.

Since the end of lockdown the revived tours have burgeoned, prompting Devaney to train an assistant guide to help with the swelling numbers. ‘Originally I kept my tours really small so that I could chat to people,

From lengths of beautiful lace, spools of thread and metres of binding, to ribbons and vast collections of buttons, the treasures hidden in the alleyways 10 to 20 minutes’ walk from the Rue de la Paix will be uncovered on one of Rebecca Devaney’s Textile Tours of Paris



la droguerie

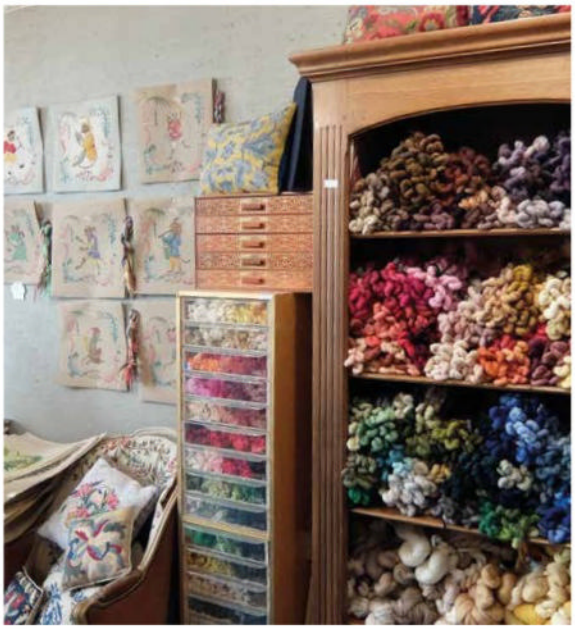
but now I'm getting groups of ten to 15.' She has also expanded the extent of her route and now gives Saturday morning tours of Paris's renowned flea market. 'It's the largest in Europe and made up of 13 to 14 markets. You can literally spend a day in each one.'

Devaney shares a marvellous tale about how the markets originated, of the 'moon fishermen' who'd steal clothes off the city's washing lines by moonlight and then sell them the next day to wealthy Parisians who'd go to the markets after Mass on a Sunday. She's clearly enchanted by her new find and in particular with Galerie les Curieux, 'run by a very dapper man in his 60s.' With an exquisite sense of specificity, his principal ware (of which he is a world specialist) – antique sewing necessaries – cover a mere 30-year period, from 1780 to 1810.

'There are golden thimbles, tiny scissors and chatelaines, mother-of-pearl spools and silver pencils. People fall in love with them all the time. It's a place full of joy and sadness.'

Ellen Bell

TEXTILETOURSOFPARIS.COM



SAMPLERS OF SEDUCTION

Samplers of Seduction is a collection of beautiful embroidery kits accompanied by a series of self-guided online courses. These kits are a labour of love born of Rebecca Devaney's experience studying haute couture embroidery at École Lesage and then working as a professional embroiderer in the ateliers of Paris for Chanel, Dior, Givenchy, Yves Saint Laurent, Valentino and many more. Rebecca has assembled these kits from the finest makers of embroidery materials in the world.

As the Samplers of Seduction collection continues, each new embroidery kit will be inspired by a different vintage pattern hidden in the archives and museums of Paris.

Available at TEXTILETOURSOFPARIS.COM

PHOTO BY HOHUA

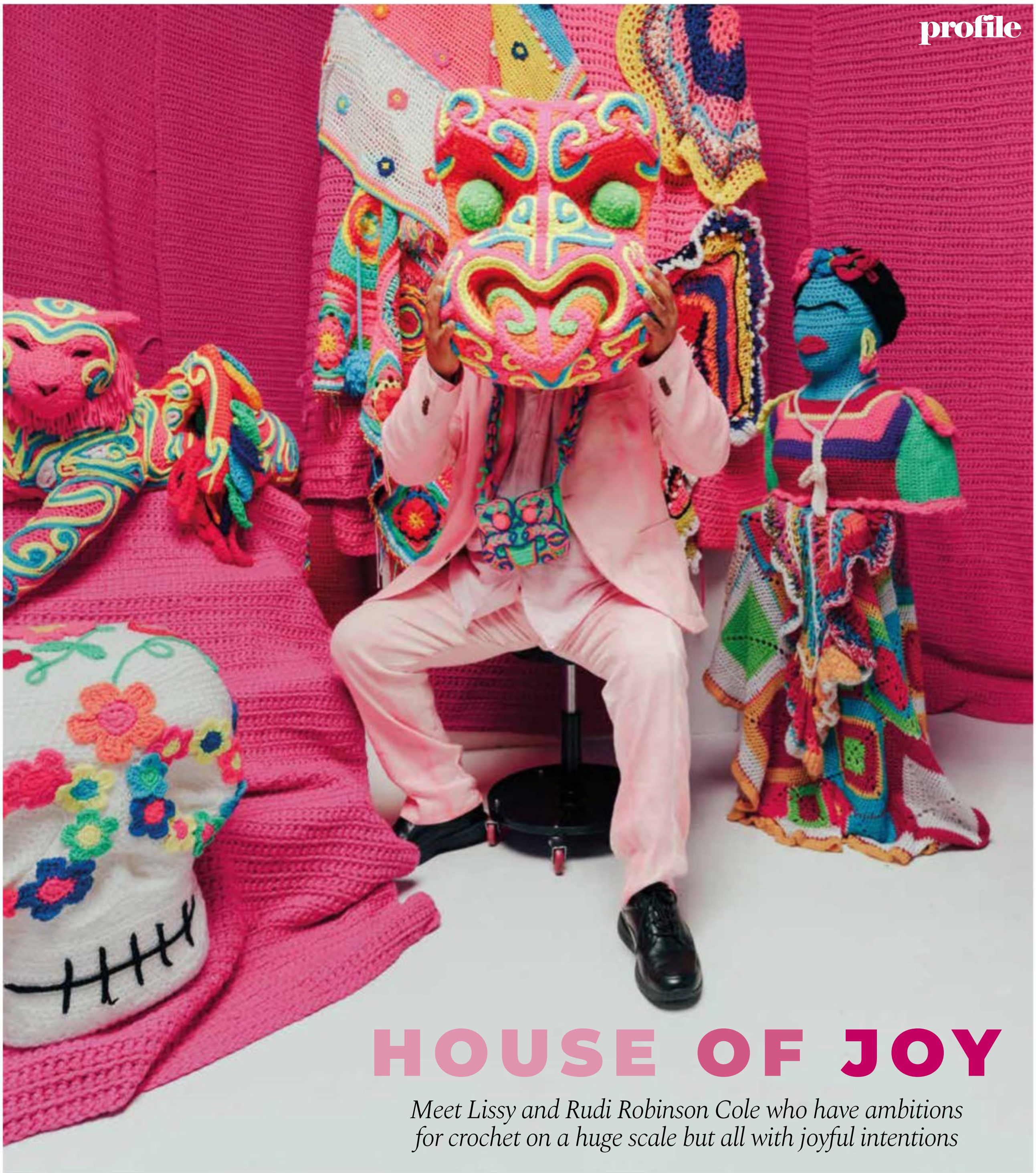


PHOTO BY HOHUA

HOUSE OF JOY

Meet Lissy and Rudi Robinson Cole who have ambitions for crochet on a huge scale but all with joyful intentions

Lissy and Rudi Robinson Cole are a couple with immense energy who have begun the task of recreating a Wharenui Harikoa (or House of Joy), a Maori meeting house. With Rudi's carved polystyrene supports giving shape to Lissy's hugely exuberant neon crochet the couple, who got into crochet through yarn-bombing, are well on their way to making their dream a reality

Lissy and Rudi are 'doing the *mahi*' this year, a contemporary term of admiration in New Zealand, where *mahi* translates loosely from Te Reo Māori as work. In a country that is relaxed but values hard graft, these artists are out in front: dedicated, visionary, creative and collaborative, their mission is to complete a life size Māori meeting house to raise smiles, rejecting carved wood and flax weaving in favour of fluorescent crochet.

Wharenui Harikoa (House of Joy) is a superb demonstration of the happiness, determination and artistry that Lissy (Ngāti Hine, Ngāti Kahu)* and Rudi (Ngāti Kohua, Ngāti Makirangi, Ngāti Paoa, Ngaruahine, Ngāti Tū, Te Arawa) bring to their collective practice. Strong colours, dazzling patterns and overwhelming love for each other, for making, and for their heritage, families and communities define their inspirational mahi. Their lives and work melded in a moment, a conversation appropriately on their 2017 wedding day. Lissy describes an industrious morning, she sewing bunting to adorn their

‘We don’t muck around, we’re very efficient. There’s urgency to finish this mahi*’*

Auckland house for the party later, Rudi carving wooden platters for the food. The harmony and sheer pleasure of making together for their future inspired a strong mutual feeling, a moment where their feelings created ‘a spiral up into the sky’.

This hardworking couple recognised a unique strength in the flash of joy they experienced, a bond stronger than marriage vows. There and then they committed to take that energy and creativity into a future where they worked together as artists. Lissy and Rudi spontaneously offered up a karakia (prayer) in thanks for the inspiration they felt, a ritual they now repeat daily.

Lissy speaks intently of the quality of pono (truth or faithfulness) in their life, of striving ‘to live with their souls’ purpose’. Their determination to live and work creatively with joy permeates everything. It’s not necessarily restful – in middle age there are more imperatives to get things done, to seize opportunities. Lissy says, ‘We don’t muck around, we’re very efficient. There’s urgency to finish this mahi. We’ve experienced our losses [in the past].’

Lissy and Rudi are firmly committed to making a difference for communities locally and further afield, positioning their work through the catchphrase ‘igniting joy globally’. Their values are manaaki, aroha and wairua, which can be translated as respect/hospitality, love and spirit. This is a completely faith-based artistic practice, a marriage of impressive skills and knowledge, built on mātauranga Māori – knowledge and values that are passed through generations, where tīpuna (ancestors) are revered.

Lissy has always been creative, working with textiles all her life, styling her flamboyant wardrobe, and running a fashion label that celebrated plus-size women. Her father was New Zealand designer Colin Cole, a lover of strong colour and pattern, especially in his bespoke gowns for special occasions; despite his early death when she was only 15, Lissy speaks of his positive influence, ‘loving colour, embellishing and beautiful things’. Rudi is a designer, highly-skilled in metalwork, and now wood. Formerly a foundry expert at the renowned New Zealand Māori Arts & Crafts Institute, he was instrumental in projects that encourage Māori artists to move into new media and major commissions. Teaching in prisons, Rudi saw the positive impact of creative outlets for inmates.

Crochet was an unknown quantity for both until a friend introduced them to yarn bombing. Lissy and Rudi quickly grasped how the system of loops enables intricate 3D forms, and mirrors the loops of people, experiences and Māori collaboration that frame their world. The construction process starts with Rudi carving polystyrene shapes, over which they fit Lissy’s cloths of solid crochet, then adorn with designs in contrast yarns. Their first outing was a giant crochet poppy for Remembrance Day 2018 which they stealthily hung off a motorway overbridge near their home. Rudi was delighted; they drove past five times looking at their work.

The far more ambitious concept for Wharenui Harikoa evolved as Lissy and Rudi developed their distinctive creative vocabulary. Their 2020 exhibition Ka Puawaitia Coming to Fruition led to New Zealand entrepreneur Deb Moore of Outlaw Yarns offering a much valued collaboration. The resultant retail range of chunky yarns spun from New Zealand wool in eleven strong colours includes the neon brights that characterise the Robinson Coles’ output, a palette at the heart of Wharenui’s visual impact.

The completed Wharenui will be an inclusive space to gather, to love and heal, and be joyful. They dream of touring myriad locations – galleries, communities, maraes, prisons. Support comes from many quarters – government, arts council, galleries, artists. Collaboration is important. While the overall concept is very much Lissy and Rudi’s, there are significant contributions from artists and family. The latest twist is the Buy a Ball crowdfunder: anyone can virtually purchase

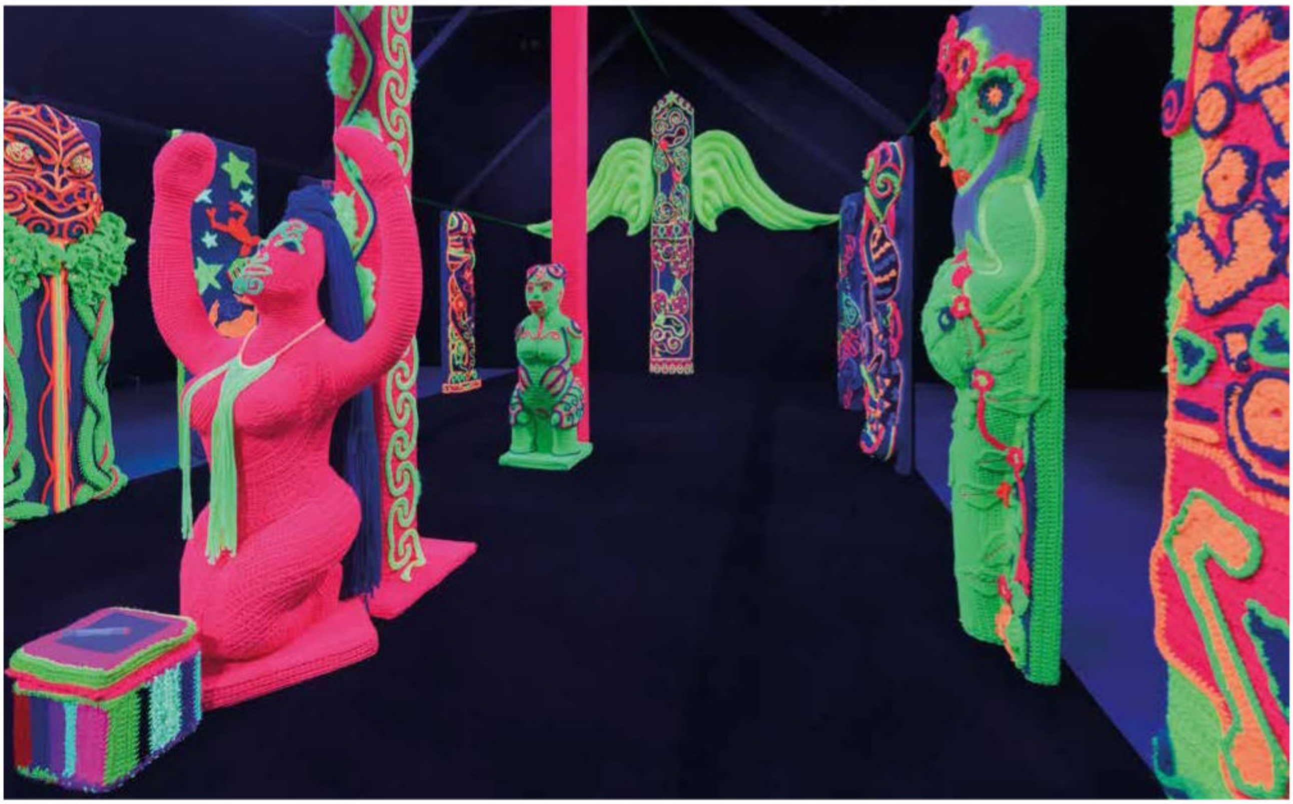


PHOTO BY NICK TAYLOR/DOWSE ART MUSEUM

Lissy's range for Outlaw Yarns to help the project grow. Launch is scheduled for July 2023 at Matariki, the Māori new year. A time of gathering, planning, reflection and renewal, this winter festival marks the emergence of Matariki (the Pleiades constellation) in the sky before sunrise. Each star has significance and distinct character for Māori, meanings celebrated in Wharenui's panels and pou (pillars). Individual pieces have been recently installed at the Dowse Art Museum. Even incomplete, Wharenui's outlines excitingly hint at the dramatic impact the final work will make. Traditional meeting house design has a central ridge, with supporting pillars and an entrance porch. Interior wall decoration alternates between wooden and tukutuku panels, with separate roles for men (carving) and women (weaving tukutuku). Lissy and Rudi up-end every tradition: working together, embracing new materials, techniques and colours. 'The use of neon in the work is loud and proud, in your face. It glows, it acts like a beacon and a portal – it transports you.'

At the Dowse the striking figure of Hiwa-i-te-Rangi greets arrivals. Her pink arms reach to the heavens in celebration and surrender, representing hopes and aspirations for the coming year. The colourful incarnation of the star to be wished on, her flowing hair is blue, her neckpiece neon yellow and her moko (face tattoo) bright green. Hiwa-i-te-Rangi is flanked by her stellar siblings, arranged around the non-existent walls, each with its own significance. Eventually the panels will join, creating a vibrant enclosed space for everyone and anyone. Lissy says, 'We are expressing the path of aroha, the path that our tīpuna have laid for us to follow.'

Liz Cooper

---

* Contemporary practice in Aotearoa New Zealand is to name all iwi (tribes or extended families) associated with any Māori individual on introduction, both in speech and writing. Iwi affiliations are of great significance in Māori culture as they contextualise a person's background and practices.

FURTHER READING

britomart.org/lissy-and-rudi-robinson-coles-mission-to-spread-joy-starts-with-matariki/

instagram.com/lissyandrudi/

dowse.org.nz/exhibitions/detail/wharenui-harikoa-lissy-robinson-cole-and-rudi-robi

lissycole.com

stuff.co.nz/life-style/homed/decor/124410923/the-couple-building-a-house-of-joy-from-dayglo-crochet

newshub.co.nz/home/lifestyle/2022/09/meet-the-husband-and-wife-on-a-mission-to-create-first-ever-life-sized-wharenui-hand-made-out-of-wool.html
(video interview)

ceac.org.nz/exhibitions/ka-puawaitia-coming-to-fruition
2020 exhibition 23 July – 13 September

stuff.co.nz/auckland/local-news/manukau-courier/6850360/True-South-shakes-up-fashion-world
from 2012

twinkl.co.nz/teaching-wiki/matariki
Explanation of Matariki festival and the stars in the constellation

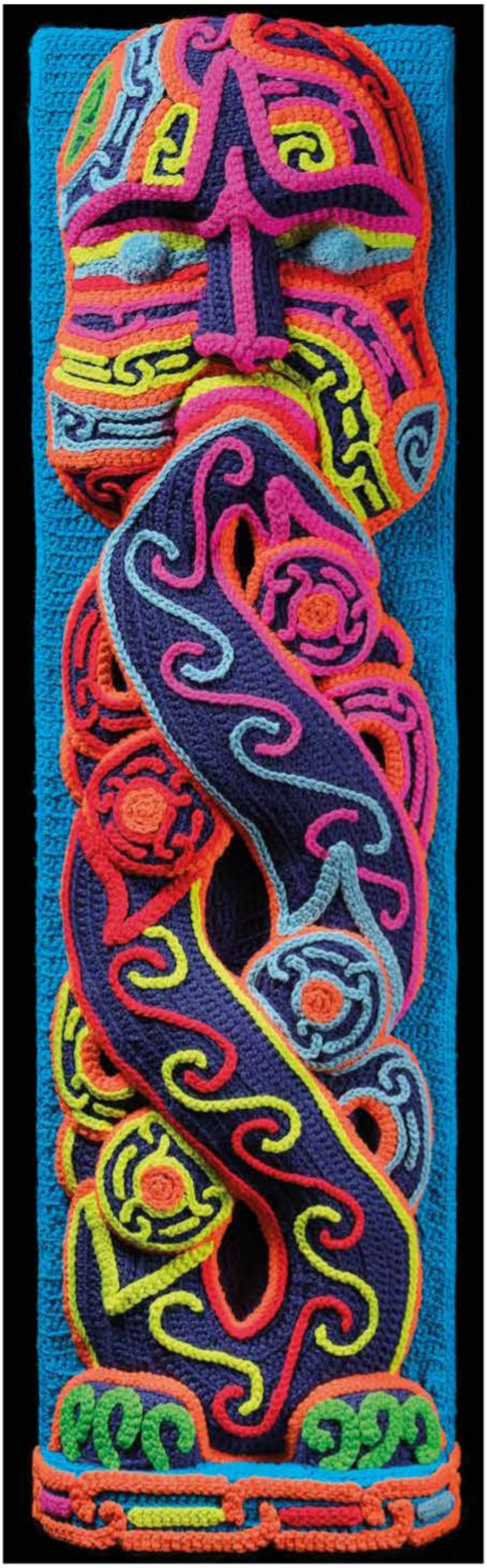
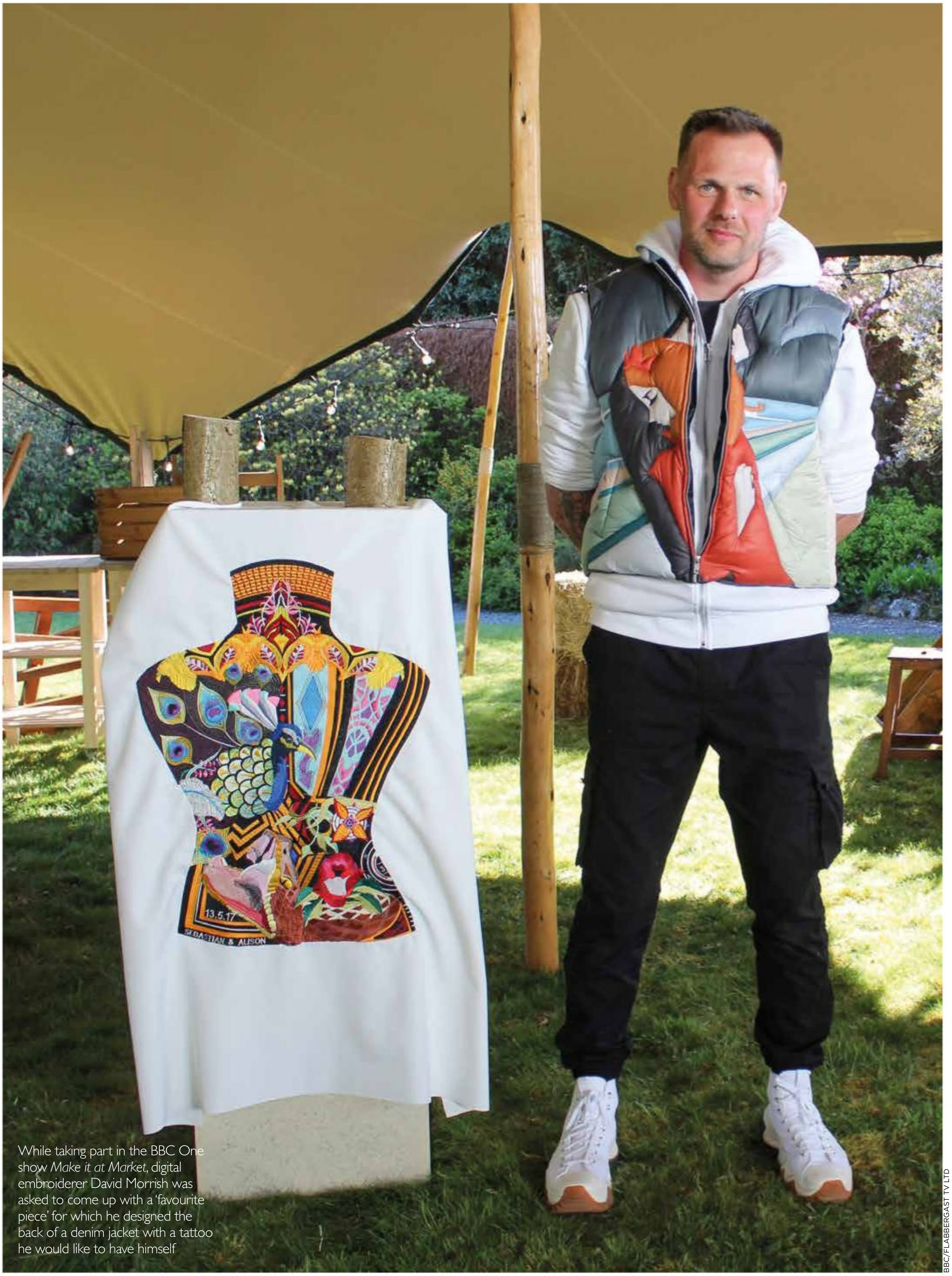


PHOTO BY SAM HARTNETT

Left: The striking figure of Hiwa-i-te-Rangi outstretches her fluorescent pink arms as a greeting to visitors to the meeting house, which though incomplete has been installed at the Dowse Art Museum in New Zealand

Right: The pou or pillars of the meeting house are draped in elaborate and effusive neon crochet representing the tipuna or ancestors



While taking part in the BBC One show *Make it at Market*, digital embroiderer David Morrish was asked to come up with a 'favourite piece' for which he designed the back of a denim jacket with a tattoo he would like to have himself

BBC/FLABBERGAST TV LTD

DAVID MORRISH'S TV TIMES

Digital embroiderer and Embroiderers' Guild scholar, David Morrish takes a bow after managing to propel his art on to mainstream television

■ IT'S AN AGE-OLD PROBLEM: how do you make a passion for art and craft pay the bills? *Make It At Market* on BBC One in January tackled the topic head on, inviting creatives from willow weavers to ceramicists to try their hand at converting their passion into cash. The BBC provided the expert tuition in the form of practitioners who had made a viable business from their skill and the rest was down to each participant over an eight-week period.

Taking two participants per episode, appearing on the show gave David Morrish the chance to bring the art of embroidery to mainstream television.

'I love the fact embroidery was seen on TV and I got the chance to show my embroidery rather than the embroidery on football shirts – press a button on a machine and you get 50.'

Initially put off from applying for the show because he thought they were looking only for heritage handicrafts, it was David's wife Alison who suggested he apply. After filling in a form, a range of interviews and several castings, finally he was shortlisted. Never having done any filming before, David wasn't ready for the constant takes to produce bite-size chunks for the production team that eventually end up as continuous TV.

'It's really quite a strange experience. None of it was scripted so you'd start talking and they'd say cut because maybe an aeroplane went overhead or there was a bumblebee. Every time you did a retake what was said was different so I had no idea how it would look on camera.' It was the cause of some consternation but David was relieved by the final programme content.

The digital embroiderer calls himself a 'digital disruptor' and loves the anarchy of street art, graffiti, graphics and pop art, which inspire his striking designs. A bit different to the hand-carved spoons being made alongside him, but as David loves crafts he found the set very inspiring.

One of the challenges involved creating a piece that could be made quickly to sell in volume at a lower price. From initial collage to planned artwork, and the digitising of the design where David decides on the stitch type, fill and colour, to positioning it on the hoodie garment and then guiding and manipulating the machine throughout while it embroiders, he was able to demonstrate his skill and just what is involved in the lengthy process. It's a long way from leaving the sewing machine to 'get on with it' and one of the reasons he aims at the luxury market. Nevertheless, the skull-design hoodie took four hours (although he was allowed to complete the time-consuming digitising process in advance) and at £150 was aimed at the youth market.

The 'favourite piece' project saw David in his design comfort zone. 'It was actually a design that I would love to have tattooed on my back. They loved the idea that I could take someone's tattoo and put it on a garment. I was always fascinated that people spend thousands of pounds on a tattoo and then it's covered up for most of the year. I thought it was an opportunity. If you're going to have a tattoo it's personal to you and I love the idea that embroidery means something.'

His business mentor Piyush Suri, founder of Handmade in Britain, suggested using fewer colours for the volume piece so the process took less time and could be priced lower but was suitably impressed with the skill David showed in his 'favourite piece'.

David also completed a high-end piece, a pop art-style embroidery on a denim jacket, which he'd already had success with, aiming it at performers and pop stars.

Over the eight-week development period David made a respectable £3,000.

He has received lovely comments since the show aired, many people saying how inspired they were by his work, as well as enquiries about collaborations.

Unfortunately, since the filming, he has been involved in a serious road incident. He was travelling at 70mph when a lorry clipped the corner of his car. His car span across the lane and was sent flying off the road by the same lorry that was now coming straight at him. This terrifying incident left David with PTSD. He is unable to resume work as a lecturer at Sheffield Hallam University.

His therapist acknowledges embroidery is his 'safe space' so he is working on a 1.8sq m piece on the theme: 'light at the end of the tunnel' to be shown at The Stitch Festival, 23-26 March. Ask him what embroidery means to him now and he says: 'It's helping my recovery and mental health, it means everything to me.'

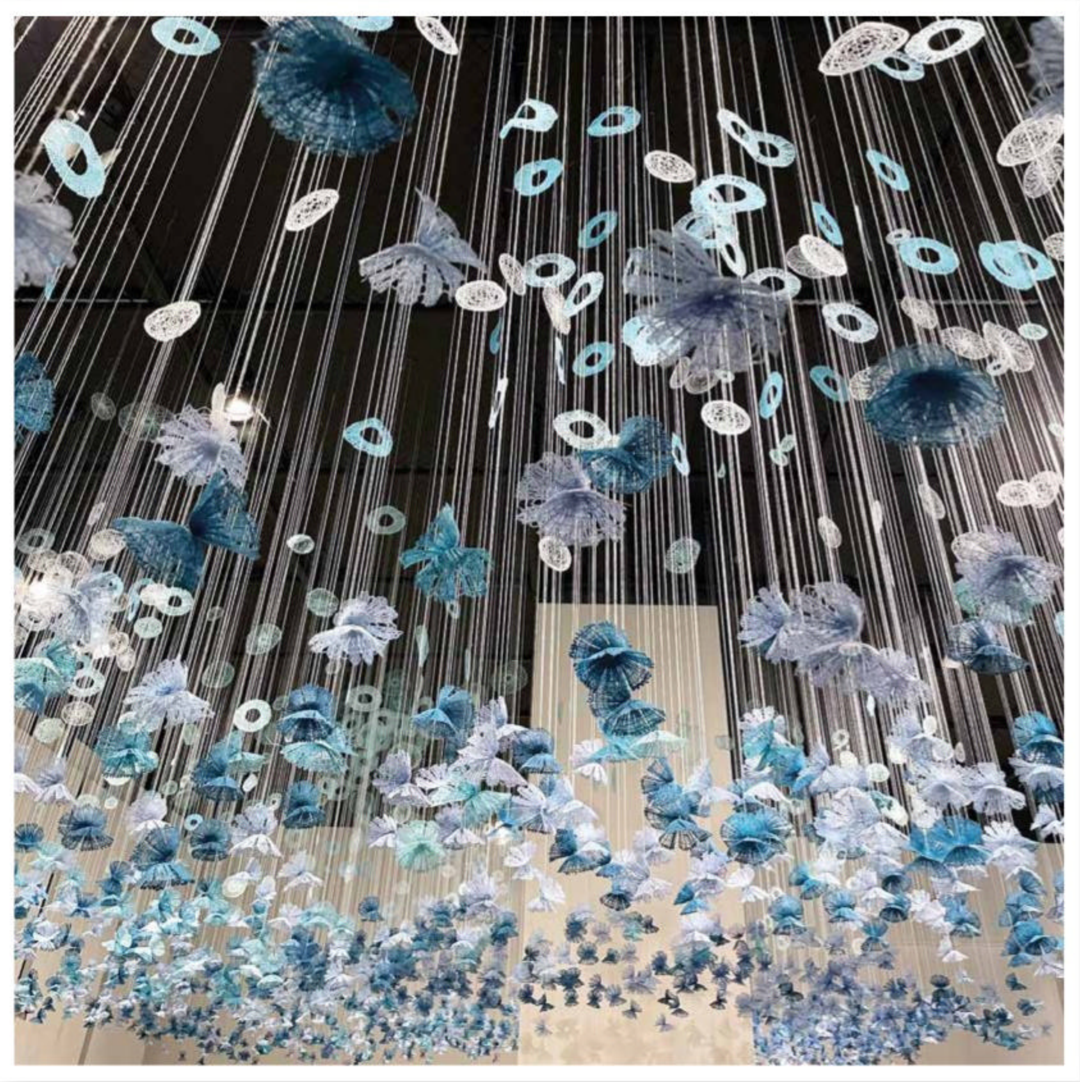
Claire Waring

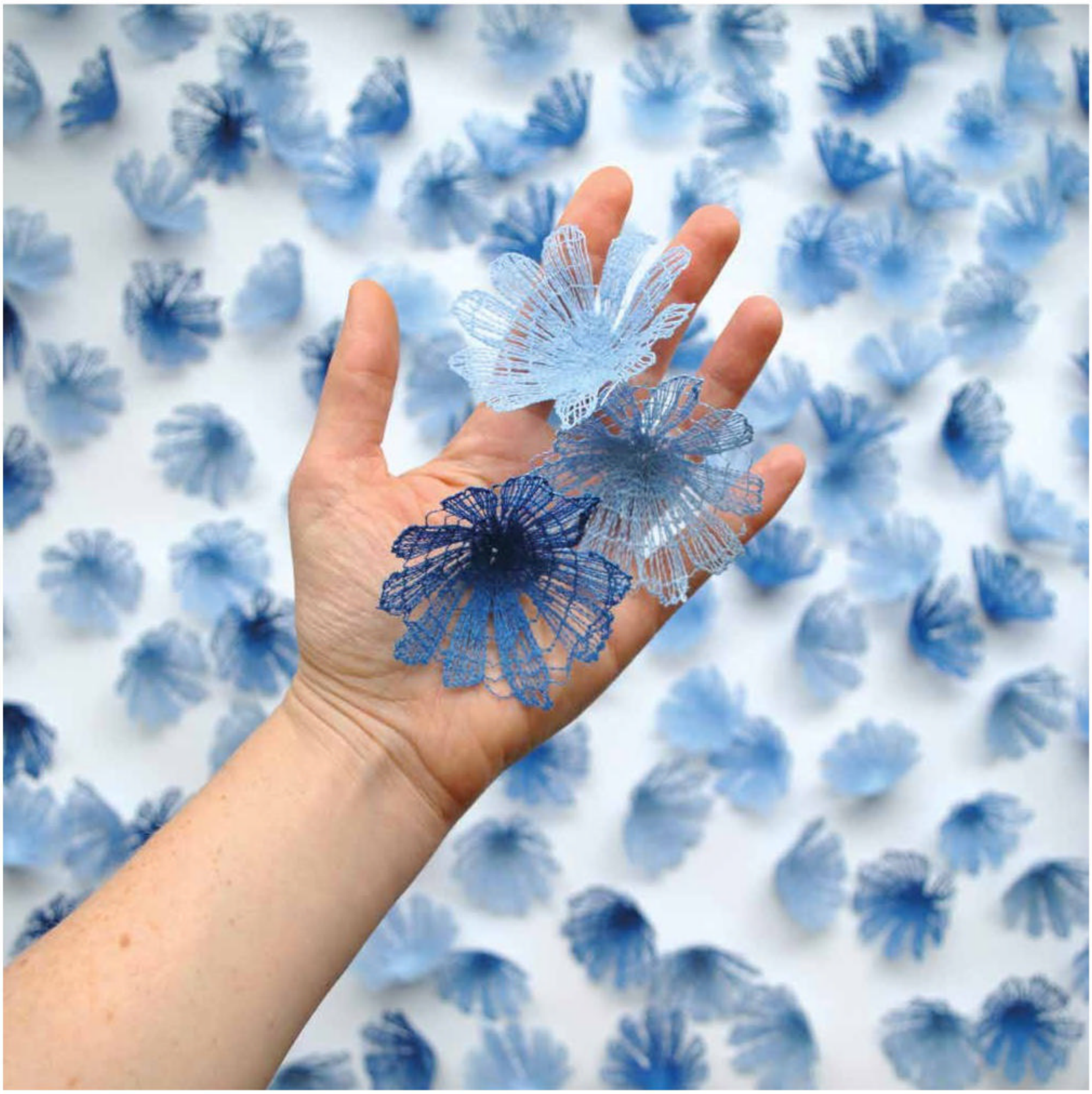
Make It At Market, episode 11, is on BBC iPlayer.

INSTAGRAM @KINGFLY_EMBROIDERY

out of the blue

Textile artist Amanda McCavour creates large-scale installations that cut to the very definition of thread and its assumed properties





■ Amanda McCavour is a Toronto-based artist who works with stitch to create large-scale embroidered installations. She is interested in thread's assumed vulnerability, its ability to unravel, and its strength when it is sewn together.

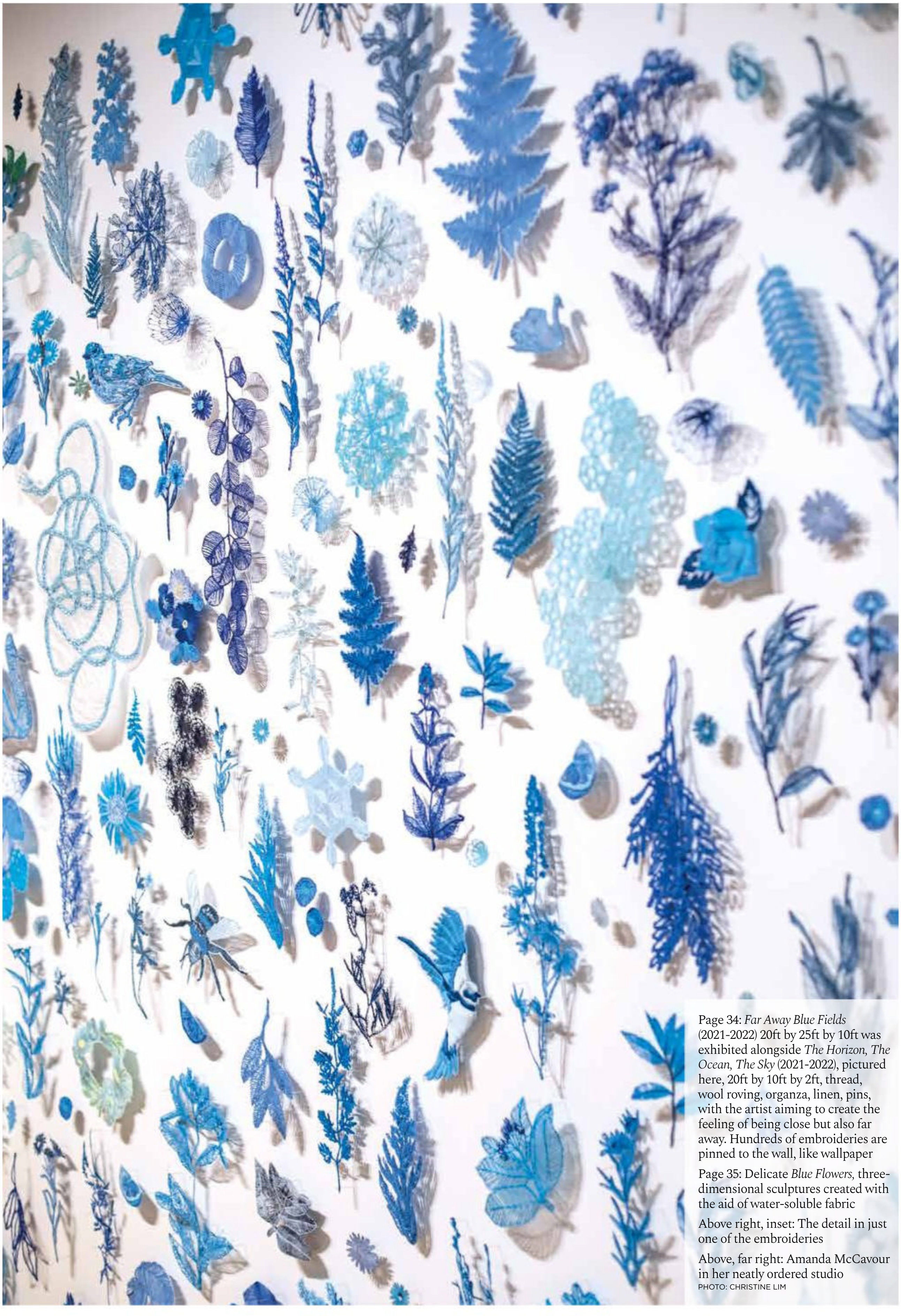
McCavour has a BFA from York University, Canada, where she studied drawing and installation and an MFA in fibres and material studies from Tyler School of Art in Philadelphia, USA.

Can we start by talking about your work* The Horizon, The Ocean, The Sky *(2021-2022)?

It's made of hundreds of embroideries pinned to the wall and arranged almost to look like wallpaper with a repeat pattern. I've worked with free-motion embroidery on to water soluble fabric to create connection points and structure. My background is in drawing and a lot of the pieces are based on herbarium specimens and pressed flowers. There is also a pigeon in this piece! It has a whimsical feeling. It's a collage of different images all rendered in blue.

Why blue?

That work was exhibited with another very big installation titled *Far Away Blue Fields* (2021-2022) made of thousands of sculptural free-motion embroideries hanging by threads to create a landscape. People can walk around pathways through *Far Away Blue Fields* and lie underneath. Both works act as a pair and feature a specific kind of blue. I was thinking about the blue of the horizon line, that slight sliver of blue, and imagining what it would be like to be in that blue space, somewhere



Page 34: *Far Away Blue Fields* (2021-2022) 20ft by 25ft by 10ft was exhibited alongside *The Horizon, The Ocean, The Sky* (2021-2022), pictured here, 20ft by 10ft by 2ft, thread, wool roving, organza, linen, pins, with the artist aiming to create the feeling of being close but also far away. Hundreds of embroideries are pinned to the wall, like wallpaper

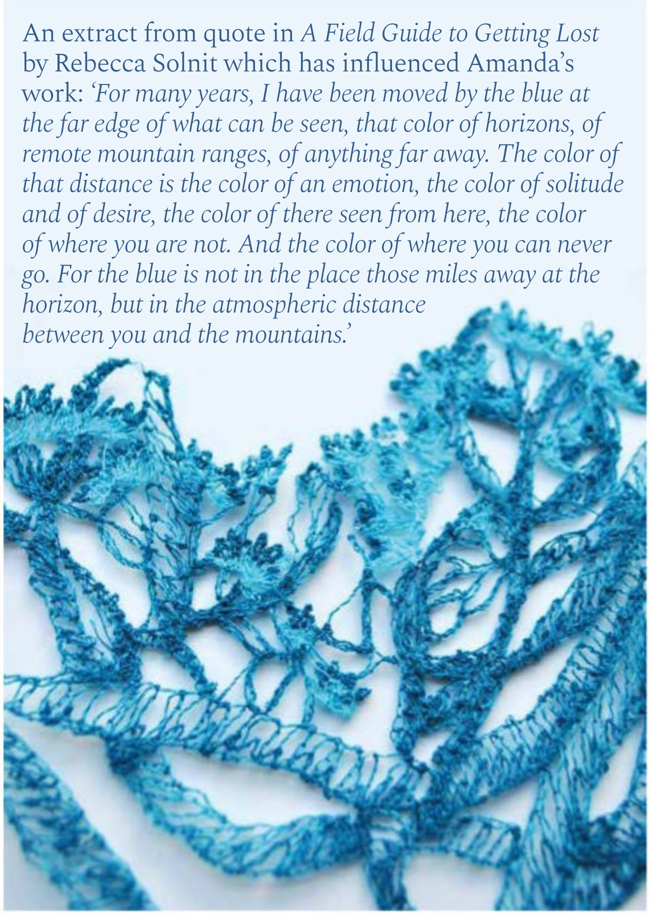
Page 35: Delicate *Blue Flowers,* three-dimensional sculptures created with the aid of water-soluble fabric

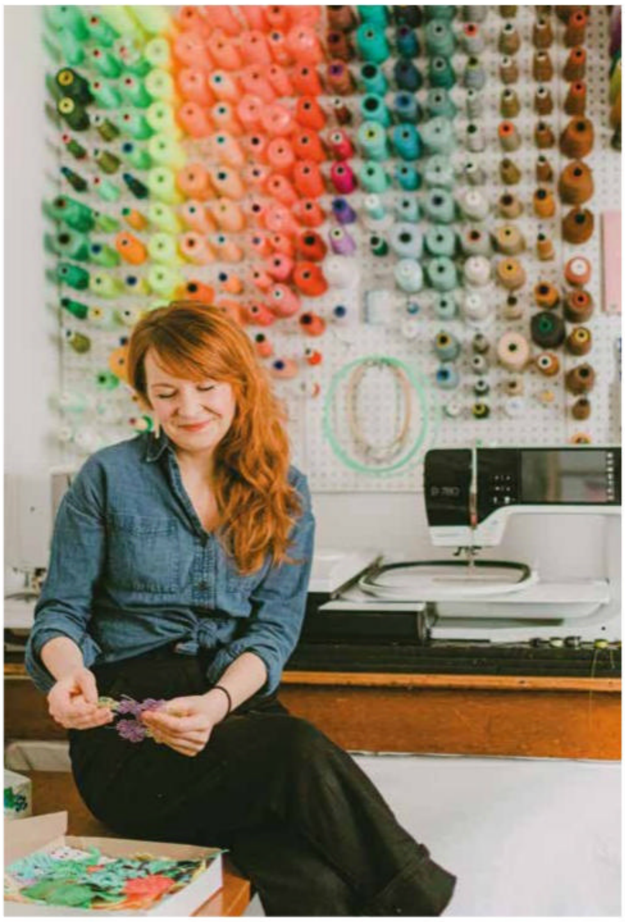
Above right, inset: The detail in just one of the embroideries

Above, far right: Amanda McCavour in her neatly ordered studio

PHOTO: CHRISTINE LIM

An extract from quote in *A Field Guide to Getting Lost* by Rebecca Solnit which has influenced Amanda's work: *'For many years, I have been moved by the blue at the far edge of what can be seen, that color of horizons, of remote mountain ranges, of anything far away. The color of that distance is the color of an emotion, the color of solitude and of desire, the color of there seen from here, the color of where you are not. And the color of where you can never go. For the blue is not in the place those miles away at the horizon, but in the atmospheric distance between you and the mountains.'*





> 'I WAS THINKING ABOUT THE BLUE OF THE HORIZON LINE, THAT SLIGHT SLIVER OF BLUE, AND IMAGINING WHAT IT WOULD BE LIKE TO BE IN THAT BLUE SPACE, SOMEWHERE YOU CAN NEVER REACH AS IT'S ALWAYS IN THE DISTANCE'

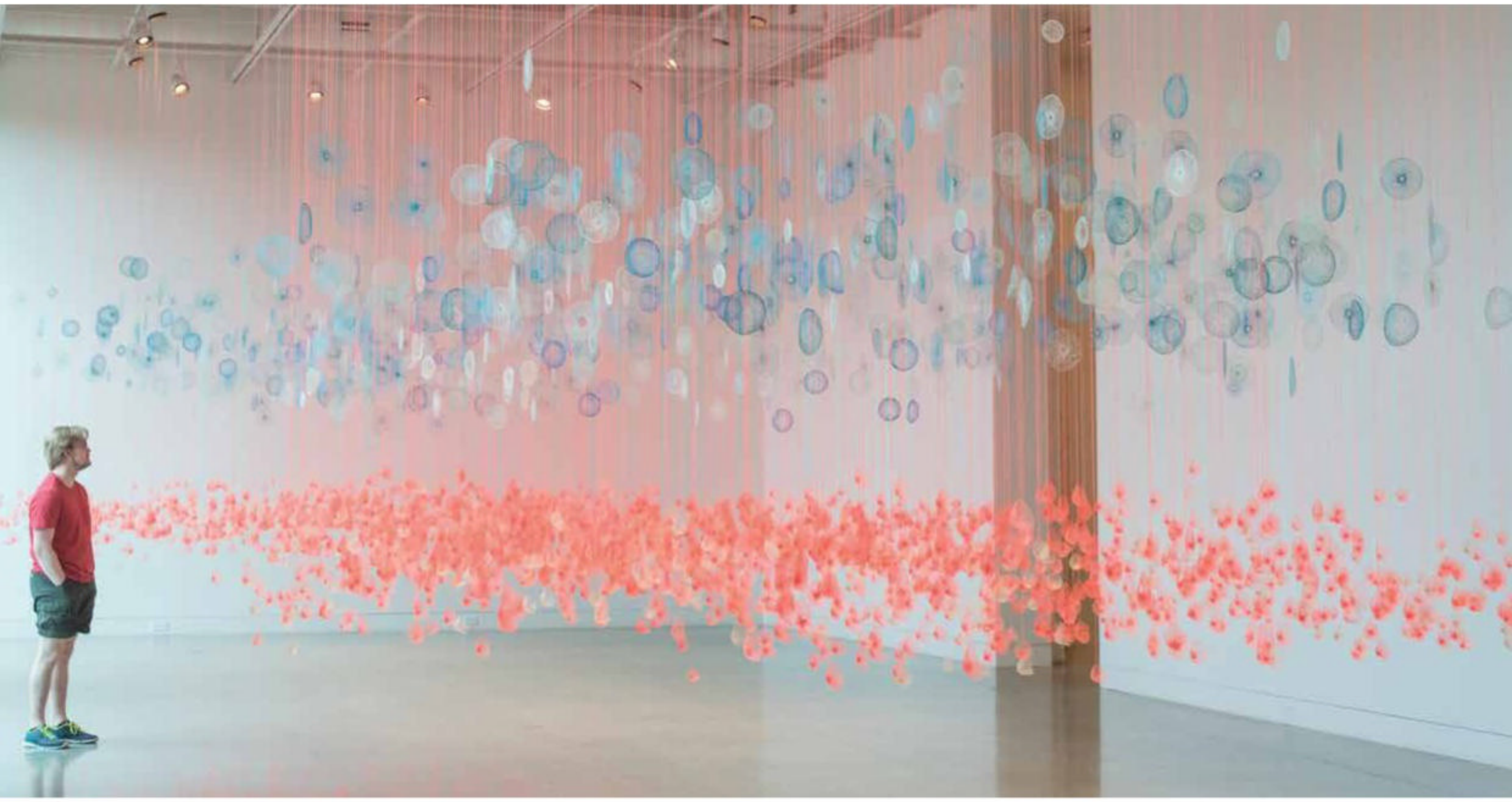
you can never reach as it's always in the distance.

How representational are the motifs?
There's a range of approaches in *The Horizon, The Ocean, The Sky* incorporating different drawing styles. So, for example, the herbarium specimens are observational, shaded from light to dark. Included are some blue raspberries and blueberries which are more simplified or abstracted. I'm interested in creating a feeling of being very close and then also being quite far away. I can't focus on each single blade of grass, for instance, there is always a blur. I was also thinking about being in a blue world underwater and how light is different underwater.

Where and how have you exhibited these two incredible works?
The first time was at Centre MATERIA in Quebec (2022) with an amazing curator who really had faith in in me. It takes a long time to make the works and I don't have a huge studio so I have to prototype small parts and there's a lot of creative problem-solving. Plants grow to their borders; they take up the space that they're given and in this way I wanted my work to feel like it was pushing against the walls. *The Horizon, The Ocean, The Sky* was expanded for Centre D'Art in La Sarre, Quebec, where it was also a pleasure to show the same year. It takes a team of probably ten people five or six days to install and it's always site-specific. The wall-based work was installed using tape to place the largest pieces, moving down to the smallest, tapping pins into the wall and carefully removing the tape to make beautiful shadows.

How does your practice relate to drawing?
I took a very conceptual drawing class at art school with dancers, filmmakers and visual artists and we decided drawing was anything that involved line. It changed the way I saw the world; I realised everything is a drawing. A thread is a really interesting type of line and I had been really familiar with sewing because of my grandmother. I was like, okay, I'm going to make a drawing out of thread but I wanted to have a surface that disappeared. So I stitched into paper and tore it away, into wax and melted it away and these were too messy for my uptight self. Then I found water-soluble fabric which was a magical thing to me. It's made out of a polymer and apparently it's environmentally-friendly though I am cautious with it. There is a type that looks like interfacing and another that looks like cling film. If water touches it, it starts to wash away like a jelly so you have to be careful. You could throw the piece into water and walk away, hang it on a silk screen to keep it in place or pin it to foam. These give different levels of control. This process is good for me because there's a part of me that wants everything to be super perfect and straight but the dissolving always moves and shifts the embroidery.

How does scale impact the work?
I had a game incorporated into the La Sarre exhibition. I made five teeny, tiny blueberries so children could find them with magnifying glasses. They range from half an inch to 20 inches high. Not huge. When I make something like a life-size chair, I wouldn't do that digitally. It's better to do it free-motion



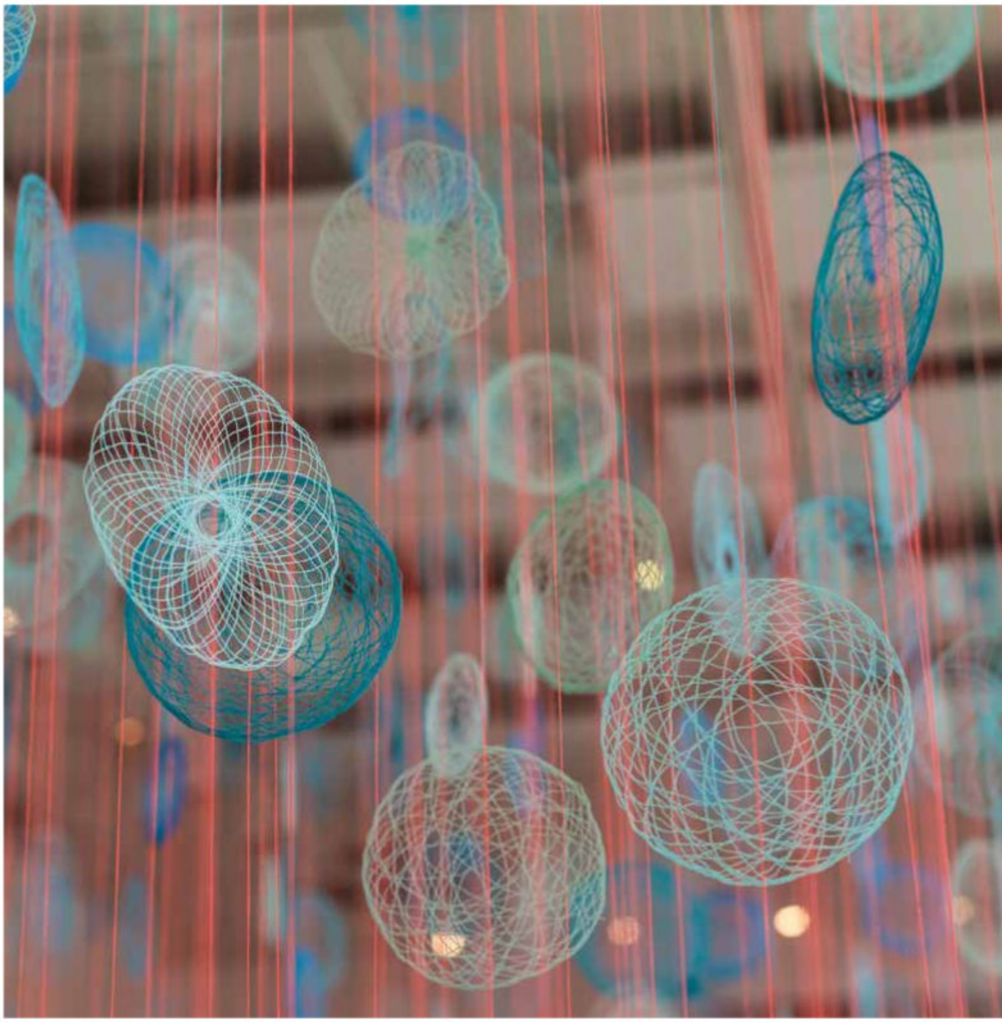
at my machine but in terms of the process itself you could make something the size of a house.

Can you tell me more about what you've described as 'the assumed vulnerability of thread' and its connections to the body?
I saw in the Body Worlds exhibition a plastinated body with blood vessels on display and I thought, that's a textile. There's a rich metaphor embedded in textiles and we know them through touch. I look at something and know how it feels. I don't know that I have that same relationship with paint but I think that painters might. Textiles touch us all the time and that connects back to the body. Textiles can be practical, artistic and expansive. Textiles have a presence throughout the whole of our lives and I have benefitted from this knowledge being passed down to me from my grandmother and my mother. There is an assumption that textiles are vulnerable but strength happens when those fibres interact and I love the poetry of that.

What does this year hold for you?
Right now, I'm working on expanding a few of my large installation pieces for two upcoming solo exhibitions. *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud* is at Cambridge Galleries, Ontario, this year, from 19 June to September, and will be a mix of site-specific textile installation and wire work.

Anneka French

AMANDAMCCAVOUR.COM
INSTAGRAM @AMANDAMCCAVOUR



Left: *Pink Field, Blue Fog* (2016-ongoing), 14ft by 40in by 80in, thread, machine embroidery

PHOTO: REBEKAH HOGAN

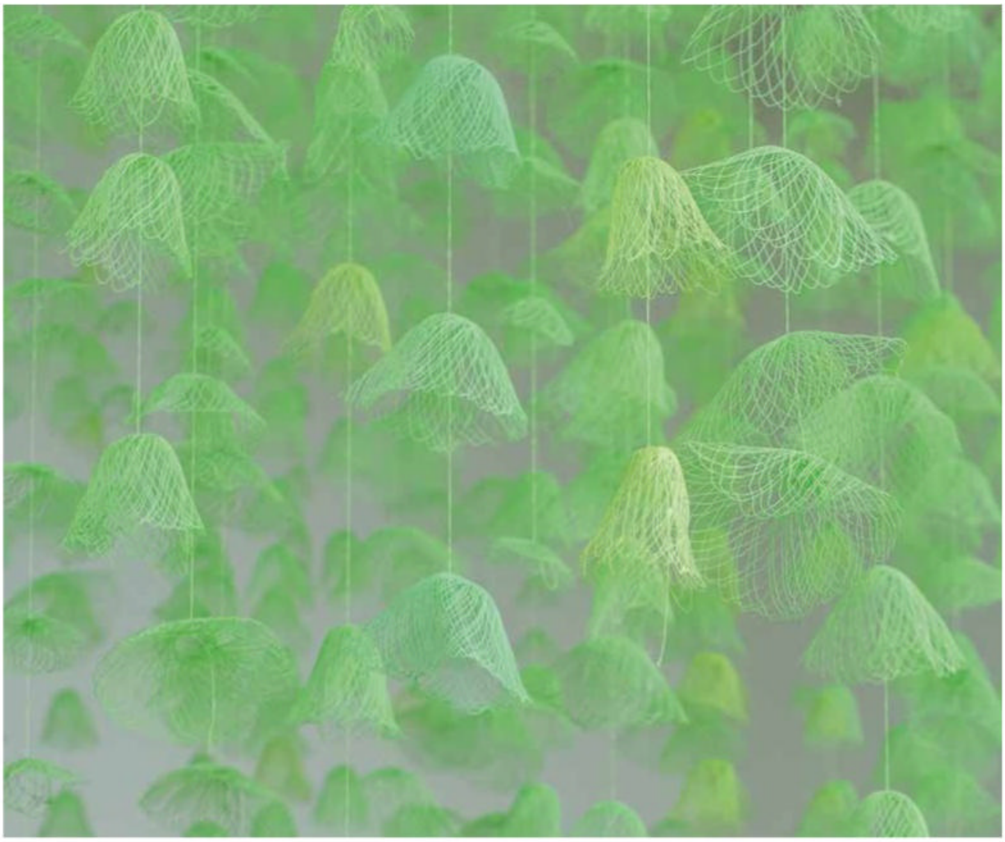
Below left: This image of *Pink Field Blue Fog* shows the detail in each individual thread sculpture, created using water soluble fabric and hung so they appear to float within the gallery space

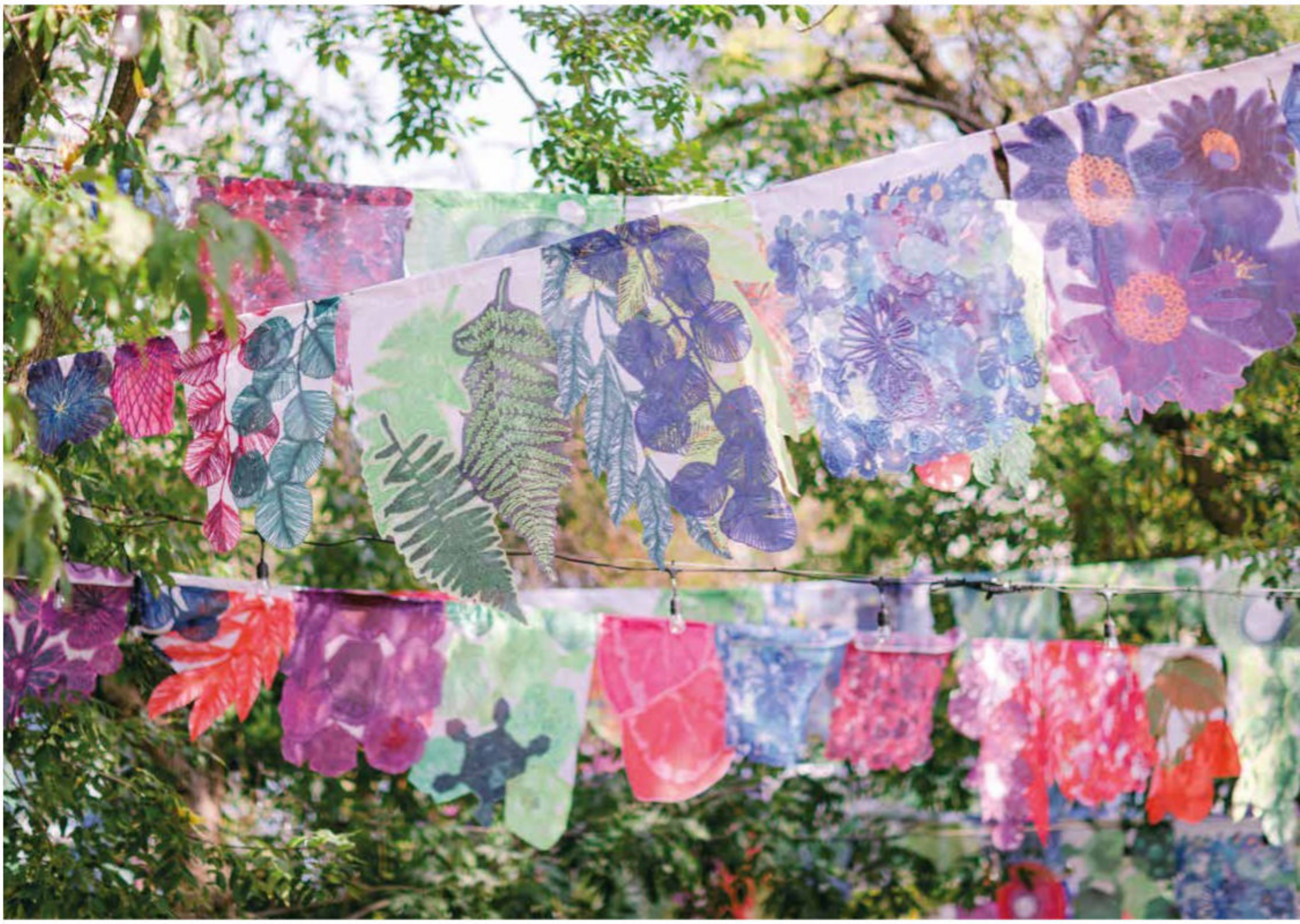
PHOTO: REBEKAH HOGAN

Right: Detail from *Accumulate* (2014-ongoing), 8ft high by 10ft wide by 11ft deep, thread, machine embroidery

PHOTO: REBEKAH HOGAN

Below right: Colourful sketch samples





in good hands

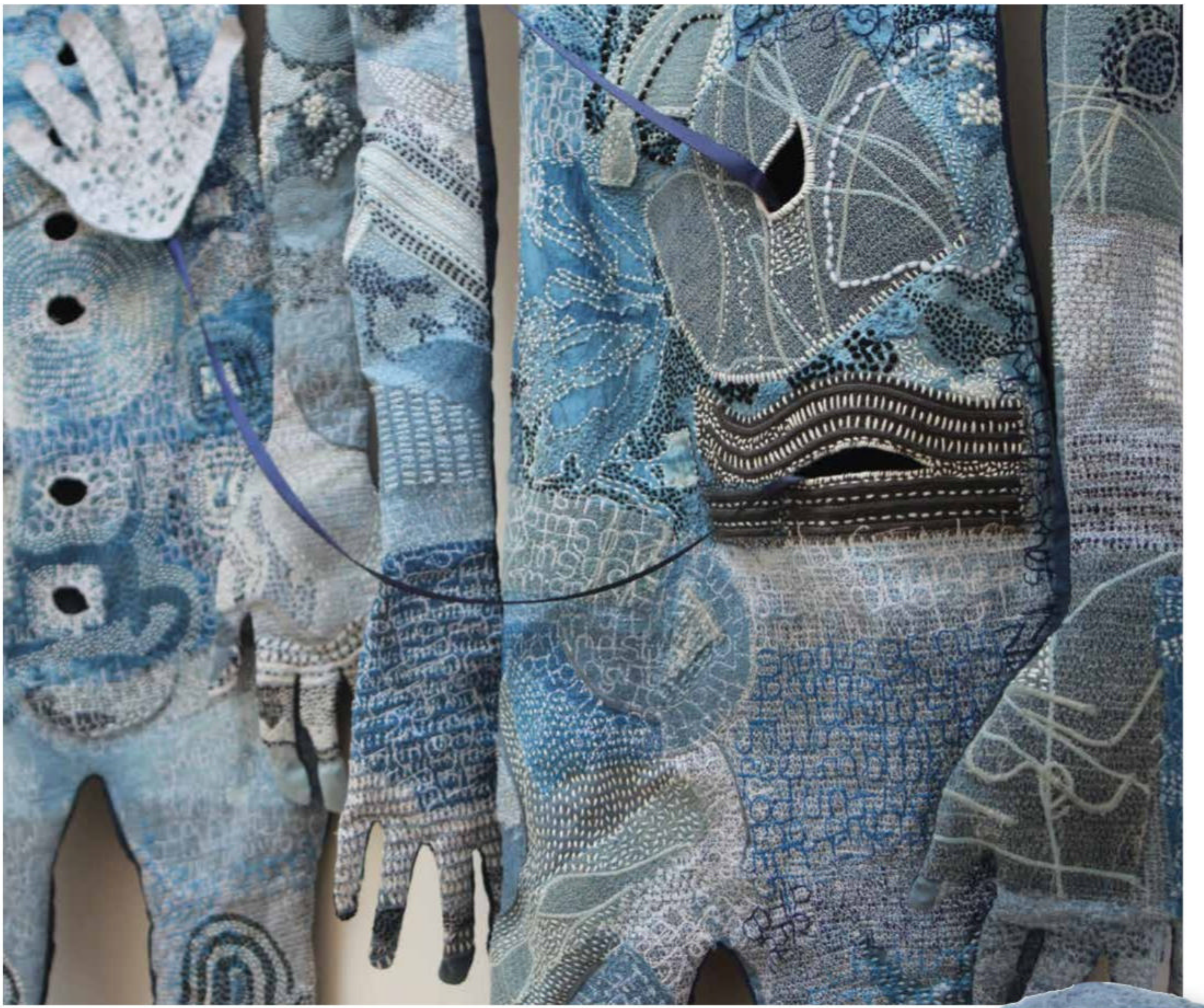
STUDYING FOR HIS PHD, STEWART KELLY IS AS OBSESSED WITH HANDS AT WORK AS HE IS WITH THE PROCESS OF SEWING

Textile artist Stewart Kelly is, quite literally, watching himself sew. Currently in his second year researching for a part-time PhD at Manchester Metropolitan University, Kelly is meticulously recording his creative practice through film, animation, drawing and writing. 'I'm looking at stitch as a reflective practice. I stitch on a daily basis as a sort of reflexive journal, as a way of documenting the act of stitching and what happens within that experience.' He describes the action of sewing as akin to a conversation, where the cloth or paper, acts, as he says, 'as a kind of catalyst'. 'It's a sort of reciprocal conversation that looks at what is transmitted through the cloth and then received back through the body.' An artist who has not only frequently taught within the arts and community mental health arena but completed a foundation course in art therapy, Kelly is aware of the impact of these experiences on his practice. 'When I went into these environments I was just taking my knowledge and skills to facilitate creative sessions but over time it's started to influence my own thoughts about making.'

Taking its initial inspiration from the human form and more specifically the lines generated by the body moving through space, Kelly reworks past drawings made in life rooms. Describing it as 'visiting the lines with stitch', Kelly takes the original image to another dimension. 'For me the act of drawing with conventional materials and the act of drawing with a needle are very connected; working with thread and stitch just takes it that step further. With drawing you're working on the surface of the paper but with stitch you're penetrating the surface, taking it to a deeper, more profound level.'

Kelly's decision to make his pieces predominantly on paper rather than cloth is a singular one. 'I'd set out wanting to use drawing in my textile work and I'd tried to translate the drawings on to the cloth through printing but something always seemed lost in translation – the immediacy of the marks was lost. So, frustrating as it has been to work on paper I felt that using that particular surface was somehow more authentic to the original drawing.' Initially heavily machine-stitched (though now less so with Kelly currently favouring hand-stitching), the thread serves as a strengthener making the cartridge paper more pliable. 'It was a transformation that sort of happened. As a result the work is neither a drawing nor a textile, it's somewhere in between.'

It's an ambiguity, a liminality that Kelly appears to both accept and even enjoy, though he is nonetheless alive to its



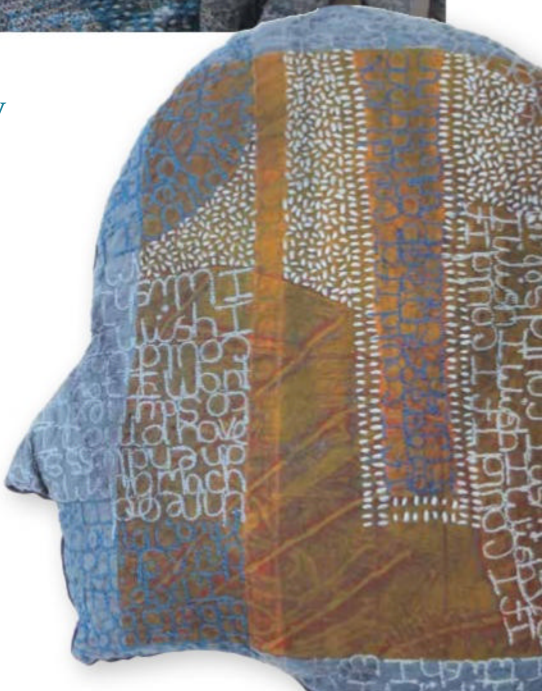
consequences. 'I don't often get selected for textile exhibitions but always for drawing ones strangely. Maybe it's that people from the drawing community are interested in stitch whereas those in textiles think "Well, what is this then? Is this part of our club or not?"' This marginalisation resonates with his PhD's emphasis on gender and identity and notions around limbo, fluidity and indistinctness, which, as he says have shadowed him throughout his practice. Kelly describes this conferred nonconformity as something that 'happened' to him. 'You go to fine art galleries and they say "No, your work is applied arts, go back over there." I find myself in the middle and always having to explain myself.' Kelly laughs, 'I'm not sure that people from other creative disciplines have this experience.'

From an early age Kelly knew he wanted to be an artist. 'I'm not sure that I grew up in a particularly creative household, though I do remember my father teaching me to knit. But I had this desire. I was always making drawings and I remember going to art galleries and thinking this is what I want to be and I just went looking for it. Maybe I saw some potential there for someone who didn't say a lot.' At school, and then later at university, the gender-specificity of textiles was clearly delineated. 'There was just me. But that's always followed me:

'I stitch on a daily basis as a sort of reflexive journal'

Opposite page: *Me & My Shadow* (detail), hand and machine embroidery on indigo dyed cloth, 180cm by 100cm (2018)

Right: Head from *40 Heads* (detail), collograph print, hand embroidery on indigo dyed cloth, 25cm by 25cm each (2018)



when I did my BA in fashion and textile design at Liverpool John Moores there were maybe 60 girls and three boys on the course. I remember all the other boys did graphic design and all the girls from textiles going out with them.'

Although not setting out to be 'a man who sews', Kelly is evidently accepting of this identity ('It's worked for me and against me'), choosing to concentrate on its creative possibilities and potential for change rather than any limitations it may bring. And though the field of male artists working with textiles has certainly widened ('When I started in the 1990s there was just Michael Brennand-Wood'), being on the perimeter is still, as Kelly says, 'A lonely place to be.'

In fact it was the isolation brought on by the Covid-19 lockdowns that inspired Kelly's current research. 'The project actually grew out of the pandemic. Up to that point I was working on those machine-stitched pieces in the studio and doing lots of teaching. And then everything stopped and I couldn't go to the studio so I was at home just hand-stitching every day. There was no schedule. I was just living through each day as if every stitch was a footprint. It was then that I started thinking about men who had stitched and how they hadn't been represented by art history.'

Kelly began to formulate a kind of archive. 'I found a richly-textured, diverse history mostly of veterans, sailors and soldiers and it occurred to me that all of these men were stitching to survive their situations.' The therapeutic nature of stitching and the fact that all the men he researched, as well as those with whom he has made contact since, appear to stitch in solitude are significant discoveries for Kelly. Referring to how women were, historically at least, known to have sewn collectively, for both economic and social reasons, whether in the sewing bees of 18th-century France or as quilt-makers in 19th-century North America, Kelly wants to discover why this didn't, or indeed isn't, happening for men and to see if he can build some form of collective of male stitch artists.

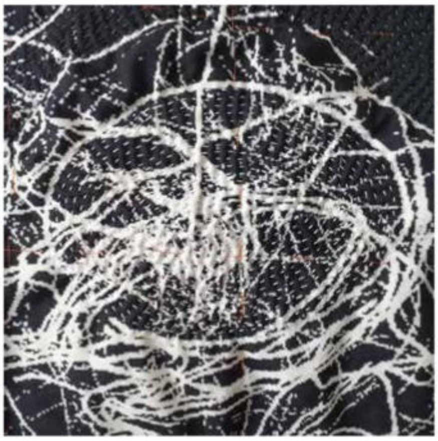
'For me the act of drawing with conventional materials and the act of drawing with a needle are very connected'

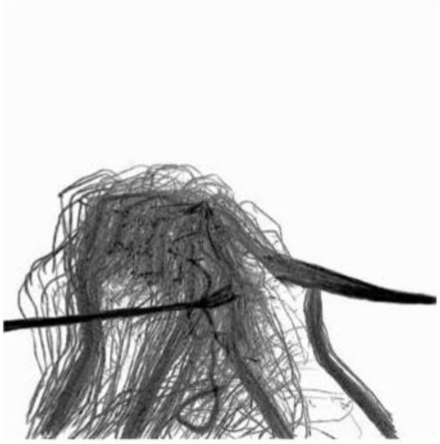
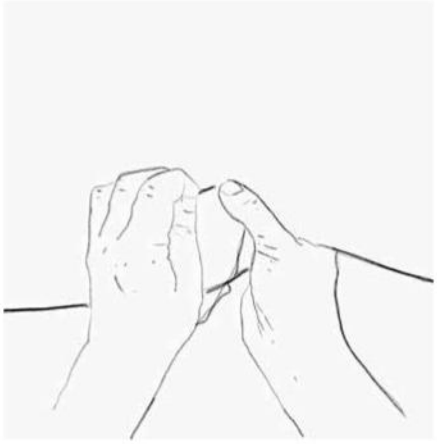
'There may be good reasons why men don't work together, though I'm not sure what they are. If you put Picasso, Kandinsky and Monet in a room together what would happen? Would they make a great painting? Does ego get in the way of something happening?' Kelly laughs.

But for now the focus is on his own sewing practice – and the action of his hands. 'I'm drawing and filming my hands. There's such a connection between touching and making. That's something about textiles, you have this really physical experience, it's close to your body, not like using a paintbrush, you're physically connected. When I watch footage of myself sewing, actually every part of my body is moving and engaged with what I'm doing. And I'd thought I'd been quite centred and contained but I'm all over the place. It's really expressive.'

Ellen Bell

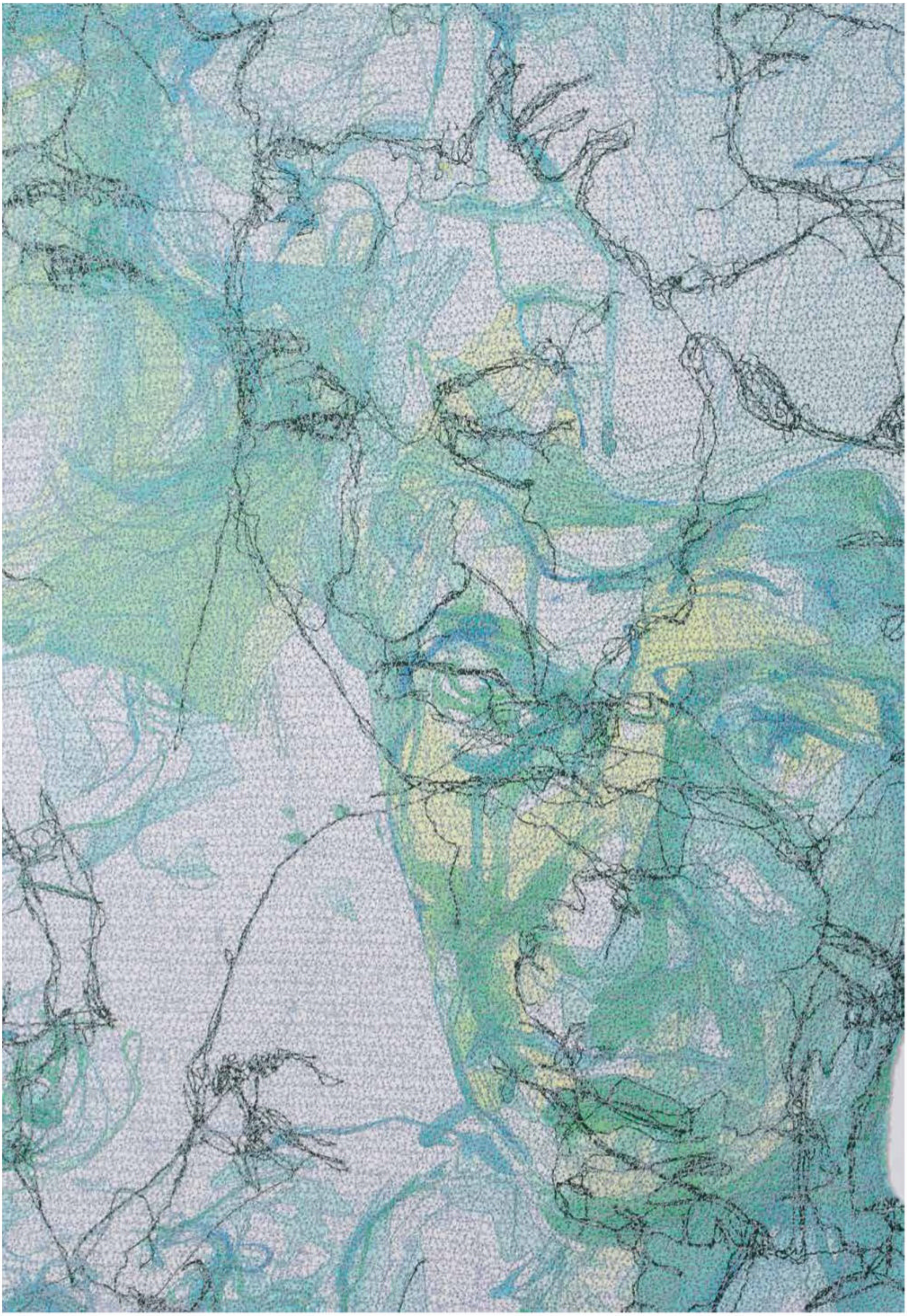
STEWARTKELLYARTIST.COM
INSTAGRAM @STEWARTKELLYARTIST

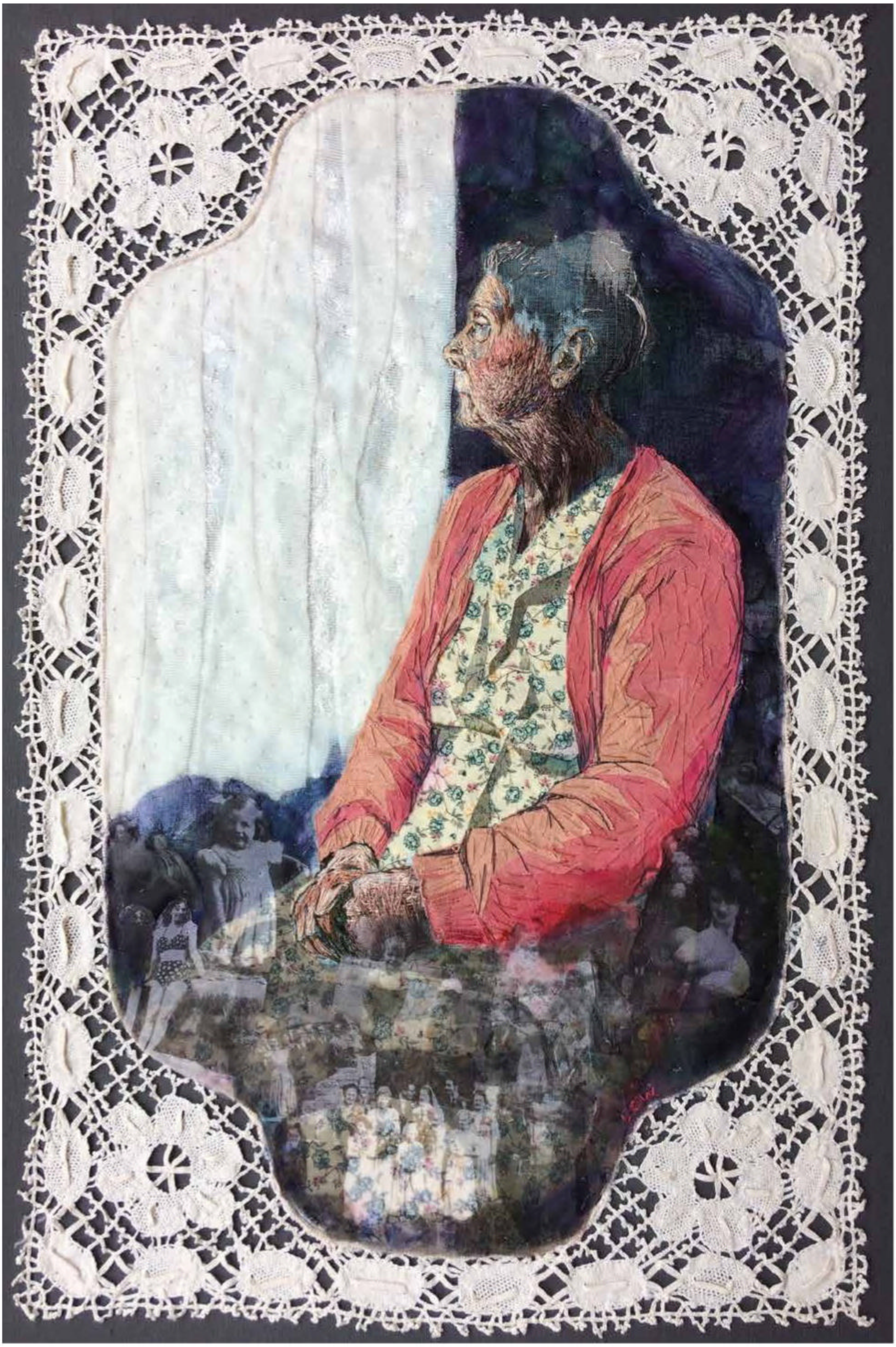


Right: *Face to Face I* (detail), ink and machine embroidery on paper, 60cm by 60cm (2015)

This page: Stewart Kelly has been quite literally watching himself sew as he studies his own practice of making for his research for a PhD at Manchester Metropolitan University. Pictured here are several working drawings and photographs that he is using to understand his own processes. He has been particularly focused on working hands.
Many of Stewart Kelly's works are now hand-stitched on cartridge paper as he feels using paper is closer to the act of drawing and he was losing the immediacy of the marks when transferred to textile





picking up the THREADS

Mixed-media artist Lesley Wood explains how a box of threads inherited from her mum led to her creating deeply personal works

AH. *How did you get into embroidery as a medium?*
LW. I studied a fine art degree at Loughborough College of Art and Design (it was a long time ago and not named as a university back then) and went on to have a lengthy teaching career in secondary schools. On reflection, Loughborough had a very good textile course running in tandem with my own. But, at the time it was not an interest of mine. I was exposed to the art of embroidery quite by accident. My mum used to knit, but she made the transition to cross stitch. It wasn't till after she died that I inherited her threads, so I chose to learn how to use them. As a person with, at the time, fine art as their foremost practice, I was intrigued by how mixed media could be incorporated with cloth. I had experimented up to an extent with all sorts of unusual mediums during my degree, but it took a while to work out for myself how I wanted to use this in my work.

AH. *How recently did you make the transition from working in the fine art arena to working with thread?*
LW. In 2016. Now I just love it, although I also still love to paint. I'm not formally trained in textiles and everything I have learned is self-taught or through attending the odd artist's workshop. The women at the groups I attend are often generous and unassuming and share their skills, with many being talented. I am ever-grateful for their guidance and support.

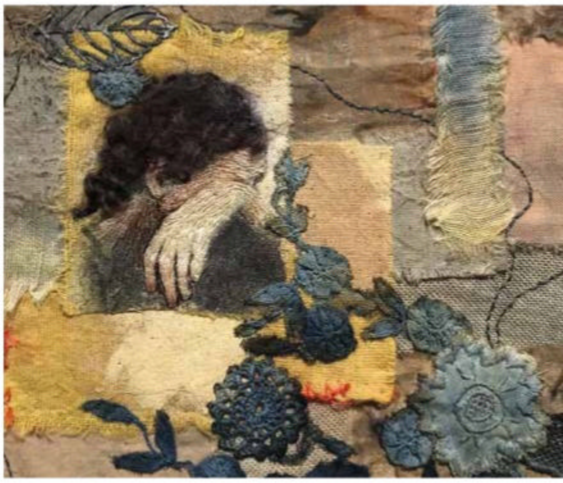
AH. *What mediums do you tend to use within textiles?*
LW. At the same time that I inherited my mum's cross-stitch threads I also found myself with a number of old photos, domestic fabrics (such as vintage table linen, doilies, antimacassars) and ephemera. Some of these brought back personal memories, some bore the stains and marks of their previous makers and owners. As a mainly figurative/narrative artist I felt compelled to create new narratives using these materials. My fine art training allowed me to compose some areas. However, the stitching was pretty crude at the start and only with practice did it improve. I still only use a limited number of embroidery stitches and still prefer to work with reclaimed old fabrics and threads. These are now generally charity shop finds or gifts from friends.

AH. *You are a part of a few groups; do you enjoy this camaraderie and fellow interest?*
LW. Yes. Stitching can be a very solitary act so it's very refreshing, enjoyable and supportive to have the opportunity to work with others. I would like to mention how passionate I am about textiles as a serious form of art. When I submit work for, say, exhibition purposes the category choice often doesn't include textiles as a recognised medium so I have to use the term 'mixed media'. I would like to convey to the art world the need to understand that embroidery and textiles is just as much a form of art as fine art and deserves respect.

AH. *Have you found that you have had key successes with your work?*
LW. I suppose key successes would include the first time I sold a piece of textile work, winning regional Embroiderers' Guild awards and getting national recognition, in particular, winning first prize in the 2021 Hand and Lock Textile Art Open category for the piece *Digital Shadows of Self*. The brief 'digital doppelgänger' was perfect for me as I was able to delve into my family history. Internet research uncovered photographs and documents of my ancestors and generated questions of family likenesses, traits and occupations. These were my digital doppelgängers captured by cameras and frozen in time. This led to me referencing Peter Pan, the boy frozen in time, and Paula Rego's prints of Wendy sewing Peter's shadow. For *Digital Shadows of the Self*, I stitched a self-portrait creating my digital shadows in a cloud of old family photos. Regardless of the much-appreciated award, this work is very personal and will remain treasured.

AH. *Would you say that within textiles you mainly study the lives of women as your area of interest?*
LW. Yes, female forms feature a lot in my work. I'm interested in people's everyday lives, past and present. As I often use domestic everyday textiles as a starting point; it seems to naturally curve towards females, the makers and menders of these vintage fabrics often being women. Also, for many years I attended weekly life drawing sessions, and the models were mostly female so perhaps that's another reason why they dominate my figurative work.
I'm not sure I would say I have found a niche area of interest as I think many artists today reclaim materials to create collage work using traditional techniques such as hand-embroidery. Mine just happens to often have a strong narrative. So, the tatty charity shop doily that someone lovingly stitched gets another life and becomes another story incorporated in one of my works. Decorative patterns also interest me on fabrics and flesh and so tattoos often feature in my work. I don't have a tattoo myself, but I'm fascinated by a person's choice of image and the possible story behind the ink. The embroidered patterns I select for my work become the tattoos on the woman's skin or I often leave the patterns from the fabric substrate exposed, allowing the woman to merge with the decoration.

AH. *Do you have a favourite piece?*
LW. I have several pieces I could call my favourite as they seem to achieve what I



Left: Formerly a fine artist, Lesley Woods made the transition to textile art in 2016. She makes use of her stash of vintage fabrics and photographs for some of her pieces, as here with *Furnished with Memories*

Above: *Done and Dusted* is an evocative work featuring a female figure and range of fabrics with different qualities. As an artist, Lesley is interested in people's everyday lives, past and present, and often uses everyday textiles to great effect was trying to communicate. Words and phrases are a source of inspiration for me. Magpies in my garden got me thinking of the traditional rhyme 'One for sorrow' and how people who collect or hoard are known as 'magpies'. Following a series of fabric collages based on the rhyme I went on to create several magpie pieces. One of my favourites is *Guarding the Stash* which has a magpie keeping watch over what might be seen as a textile artist's hoard of fabrics.

AH. ***Are you driven or guided by your home environment? Many artists during Covid lockdowns found themselves working with or being inspired by nature.***
LW. I do get inspiration from places but I often people my landscapes. The pandemic with its travel restrictions did result in me generating some new ideas. Unable to go walking on the North York Moors at that time, I resorted to viewing the scenery on a computer screen. This led to a personal project exploring the liminal space between the interior of home and the distant moors. I was also proud to contribute to several community projects during Covid [The Covid Chronicle organised by Wendy Bliss; Restriction project by the Correspondence Collective; The Methodist Tapestries Collection by The Weardale Museum.]

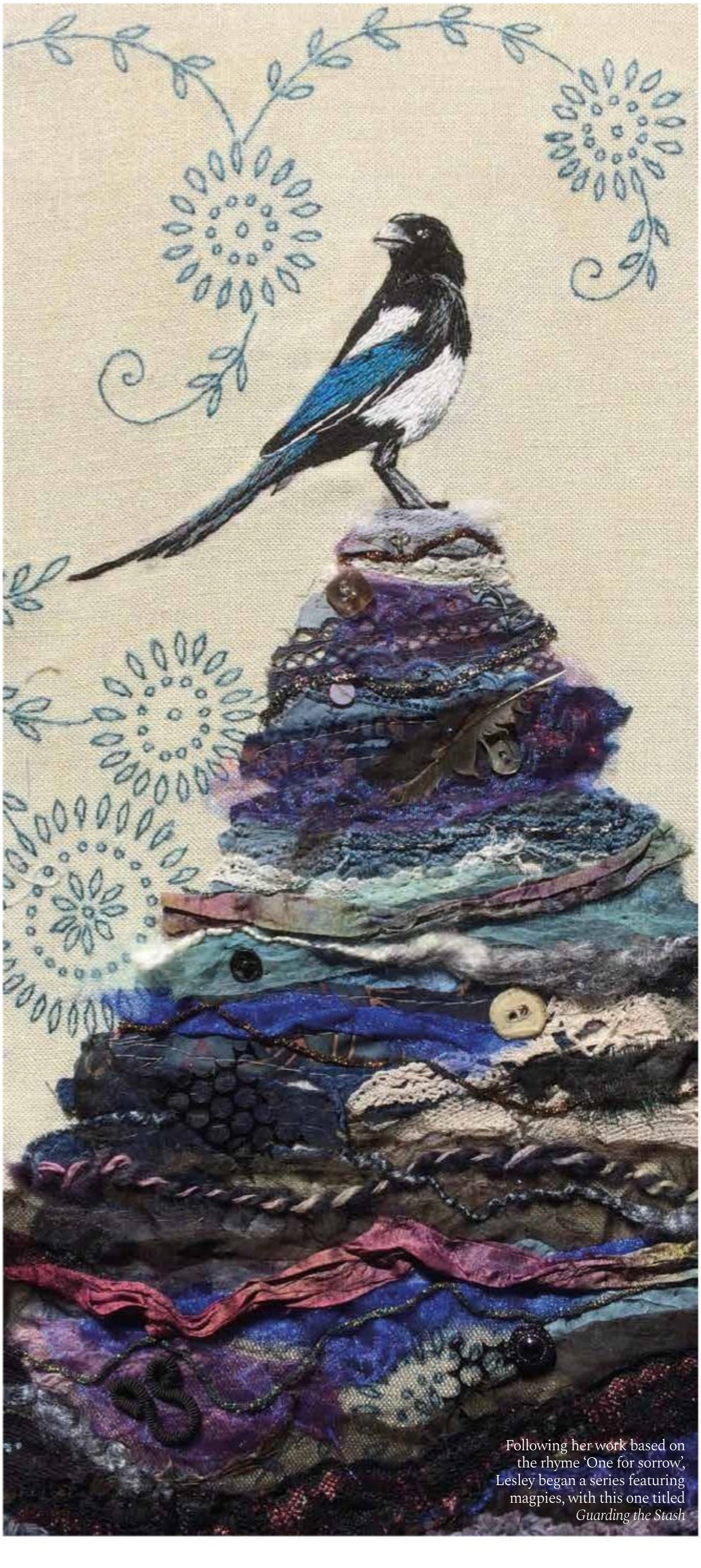
AH. ***The idea of the domestic often surfaces. What does this mean to you?***
LW. The word 'domestic' and its many definitions has sparked several of my works. *Furnished with Memories* features the sombre scene of an elderly woman alone in her home surrounded by family photos. Other works have involved the inclusion of domestic fabrics such as dusters, dishcloths and tablecloths. The titles and subject matter could suggest domestic incidents. I am fascinated and happy with how the work can be interpreted differently by others.

AH. ***Many of your contemporaries have discovered the connection between wellbeing and making. Is this something you have touched upon, as your practice is weighted towards hand-sewing over the use of a sewing machine?***
LW. I much prefer to hand-stitch and embroider as I feel more connected to the cloth and the narrative. I do use a machine from time to time, but I feel I lose some control. The slowness of my work rate can be frustrating but does allow for precious thinking time. During the Covid lockdowns, like many, I found making art such a saviour.
Ailish Henderson

lesleywoodtextileart.wordpress.com

Instagram @l.wood100

Lesley Wood describes herself as a mixed-media textile artist. Based in Durham, she has a fine art degree and is a member of both the Embroiderers' Guild and The Society for Embroidered Work.



Following her work based on the rhyme 'One for sorrow', Lesley began a series featuring magpies, with this one titled *Guarding the Stash*

reading list

Mixed
Media
Textile
Art in three dimensions
Ann Goddard

Mixed Media Textile Art, in three dimensions

By Ann Goddard

Taking what might be considered unusual materials, lead, bark, wood, plastic, Ann Goddard challenges the textile maker and artist to explore the three-dimensional possibilities of constructed form with stitch.

Set out with clear guidance and examples throughout, the first two chapters look at themes to be explored and how to research. Goddard asks you to think about the subjects that are of interest to you and how to generate research from local exploration and via collections in museums for ideas, as well as through the work of other artists. The book provides examples by makers such as Nerissa Cargill Thompson, Hilary Bower and Michael Brennand-Wood as well as her own work.

Personal themes such as ideas relating to 'boundaries' or 'ebb and flow' are threaded throughout the book to exemplify her processes and thinking. Goddard explains how, for example, extensive image collection, collation and curating allows her to refine her approaches and to express her ideas.

In chapter 3, *Experimenting with materials*, Goddard's methods of recording her usage of man-made and natural material findings are generously shared. She discusses exploration as a means to be open to discovering the qualities in the materials you use and developing an understanding of your personal approach to using them on a deeper level.

Conveying meaning, in chapter 4, looks at how and if you want to convey or share the meanings behind your work and suggests useful tools from titles and exhibition statements to presentation methods to help you to communicate your ideas effectively. These are supported by case studies to illustrate different approaches.

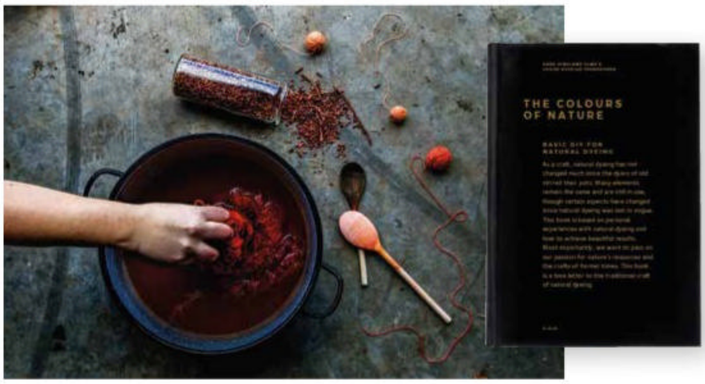
The final two chapters, *Preparing elements* and *Constructing a three-dimensional form*, look at the tools and techniques Goddard uses in the construction of her pieces, as well as approaches to how the work comes together and considerations for display.

Be warned, you will need to add a drill, pliers and other hardware to your tool stash, yet, as Goddard explains: 'Finding a solution to join contrasting materials together is like solving a puzzle and is part of the fun of constructing.'

Goddard's approach is fresh and the book challenges the maker to be open to new ideas and invention in their textile work. This new addition to the Batsford textile library does not disappoint. It is filled with beautiful images and examples of Goddard's working processes allowing the reader to get as close to the process of construction as a page will allow.

Cas Holmes

Batsford, 2022, £22.95, batsfordbooks.com



The Colours of Nature

By G-Uld (Anna Stovelbaek Kjaer and Louise Schelde Frederiksen)

Natural dyeing is having a bit of a moment so it is easy to think that any book that comes along on the topic has arrived out of the authors' desire to get on the bandwagon. But not a bit of it with the English language translation of the Danish title *The Colours of Nature*. By G-Uld, a Danish indie natural hand-dyeing venture, which sells dyed wools and embroidery threads online, this beautifully photographed linen-bound book isn't precious about the process and as a self-help manual seeks to demystify each step. This authentic guide follows the premise that plant dyeing does not demand years of experience. Lovingly put together, G-Uld's feel for nature comes through on every page. Eight recipes covering mordanting, dyeing with fresh and dried plants, as well as historic dyes such as indigo, madder root and cochineal, help the enthusiast get started on their journey into natural hues.

G-Uld, 2021, £33 LOOPKNITTING.COM WWW.G-ULD.DK

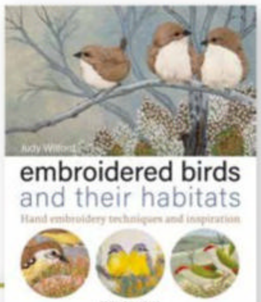
Embroidered Birds and their Habitats

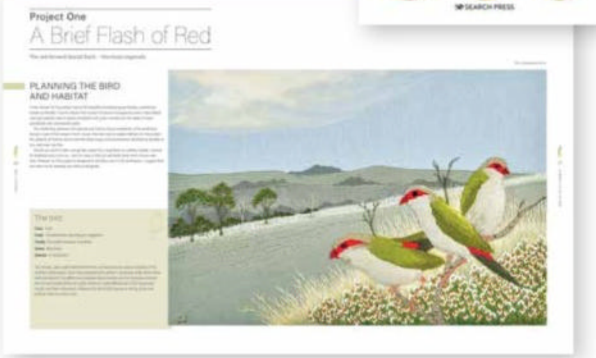
By Judy Wilford

Exploring the author's fascination with birds and the ways they interact with their surroundings, this guide is divided into three parts. Part one covers the basic materials needed to get started and researching a design. Part two explores processes and techniques, guiding the reader through the entire task. Part three includes further examples of the author's embroideries.

Brimful of striking avian artworks, this guide provides plenty of inspiration and will be a winner with any budding embroiderer with a love of nature.

2022, £25 SEARCHPRESS.COM





BLOOMING MARVELLOUS

Nestled in the corner of an 18th-century walled garden, Sunbury Embroidery Gallery shares the news that it is set for growth

There can't be many exhibition spaces with the phrase 'embroidery gallery' in their title, but Sunbury Embroidery Gallery is one such. Nestled in the corner of Sunbury's Walled Garden on the edge of the park, and just a stone's throw from the River Thames, the award-winning gallery opened in 2006 at a cost of £450,000, raised mainly from the local community. Now, the gallery is embarking on a major expansion plan for which it already has planning consent but needs, once again, the support of the local community and embroidery enthusiasts.

Since the gallery opened it has been self-funding, with income from the café with its stunning terrace overlooking the Green Flag and gold medal-winning garden, plus gallery sales and the contribution of over 45 regular volunteers keeping it in the black. This also ensures visitors have free entry six days a week and 50 weeks of the year.

You could say it is due to the gallery's success that trustees seek an enlargement of the building, extending its footprint into the gardeners' depot to the rear; but one of the main drivers is an exceptional opportunity to house embroidery doyenne Diana Springall's lifetime collection of textile works, amassed over 60 years. The collection of the former tutor and embroidery artist is nationally acclaimed. Springall agreed that with the proximity of the Royal School of Needlework and the highly-regarded textile courses at Kingston university, Sunbury Embroidery Gallery was ideally located to become an internationally-recognised resource and study centre for students and a national centre of excellence for embroidery and textile-related arts.

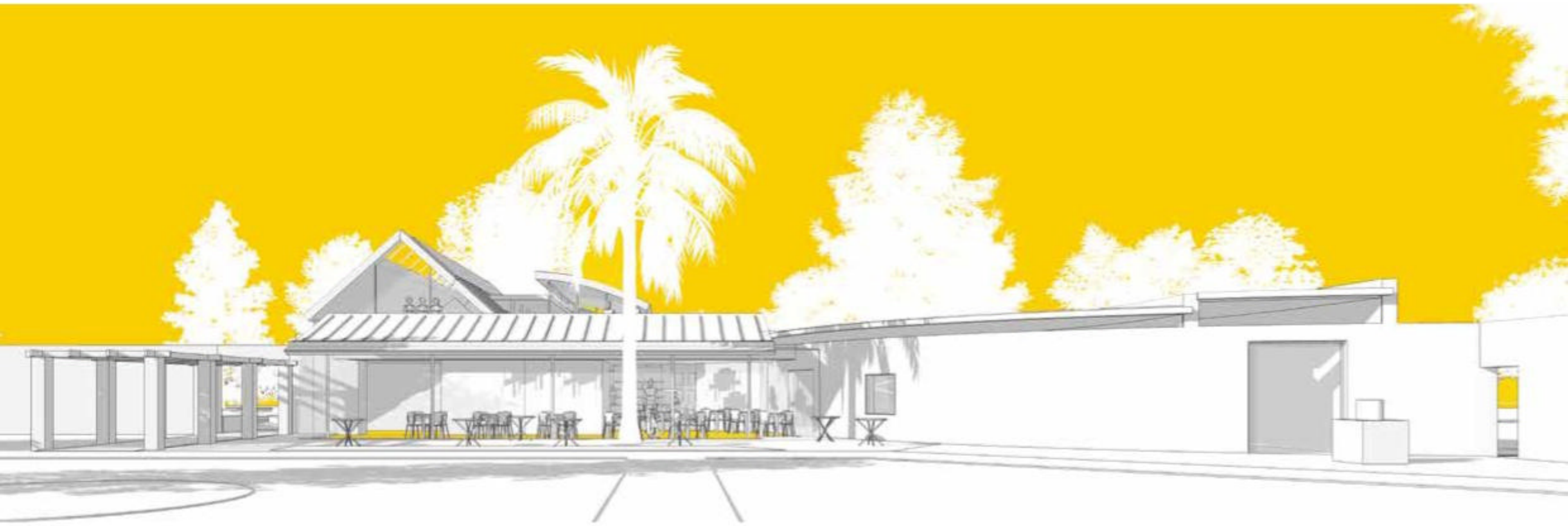
Recent acquisitions to the Diana Springall Collection are revealed in the exhibition, Home and Abroad until 12 March. From an amazing self-portrait by Chilean artist Estefania Tarud Karl, to an outstanding artwork titled *Swan* by renowned embroiderer Karen Nicol, this is a collection that delights in every way.

The V&A described Springall as 'among the most well-known of all British textile artists'. In her ninth decade, she explains: 'At the start of the 1960s, as a passionate teacher and practicing embroiderer, I made scores of 35mm slides for students to share and I bought every book, but I knew nothing could excite them more than enabling them to see and handle the real thing. The only solution was to make modest purchases of examples of contemporary embroidery by graduate students and my colleagues and peers.

'I became aware the fine art world regarded embroidery as lower in artistic importance; something that has changed little today in spite of the fact most embroiderers have been trained in some aspect of fine art. It is this injustice that has kept me mindful of having to be ready to find ways to say that, actually, we are all equally "fine". Many artworks were an agreement of exchange and in several significant cases have been gifts.'

Springall has collected hand-embroidery, machine embroidery, appliqué, hand-dyed items, low relief, quilting, machine quilting,

Invite your family and friends to take tea with you on the stunning café terrace with views of the Walled Garden

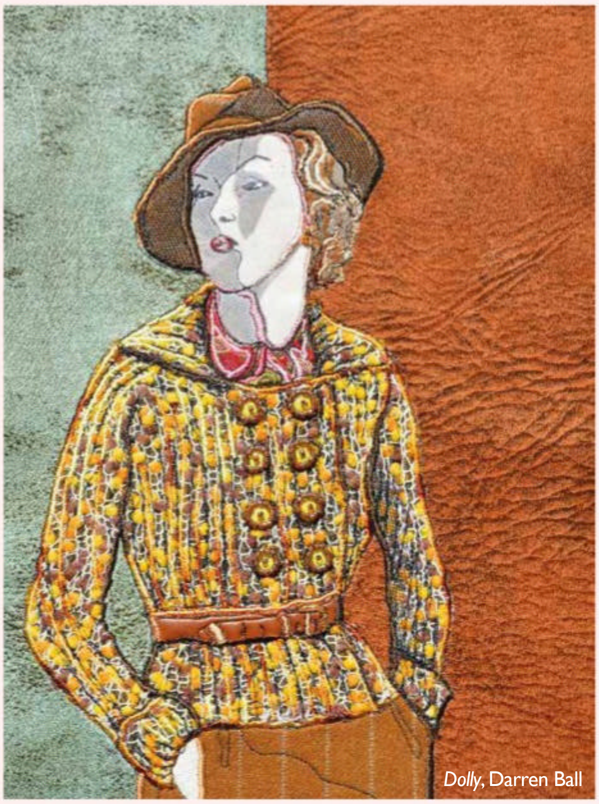


Above: An artist's impression of the enlarged gallery;

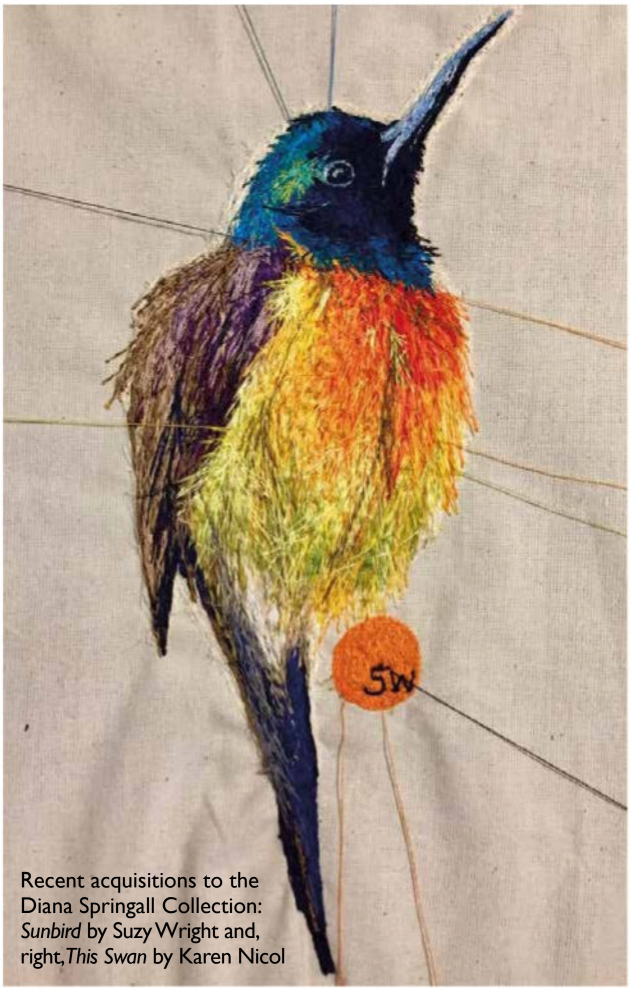
Below: Diana Springall views the Home and Abroad show

CURRENT EXHIBITION: DARREN BALL

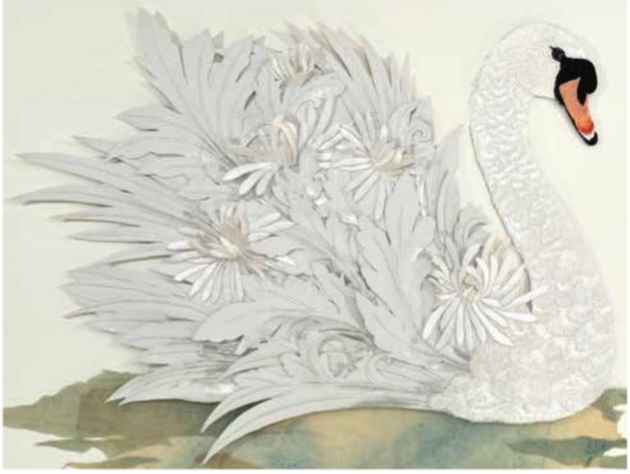
Housing the Sunbury Millennium Embroidery (on permanent display) and hosting regular guest exhibitions, talks and workshops, Sunbury Embroidery Gallery is already a go-to destination, with 45,000 visitors a year. From 14 March until 7 May, you can view the work of guest exhibitor Darren Ball, who trained in fashion textiles, specialising in hand-knit. Darren's mark-making is achieved through sewing, contrasting surface qualities and embellishment while working with his stash of favourite fabrics collected over many years. Using a domestic sewing machine, he appliqués and uses free-motion embroidery to create his artworks, which are often inspired by memorabilia among his collection of vintage *Stitch Craft* magazines.



Dolly, Darren Ball



Recent acquisitions to the Diana Springall Collection: *Sunbird* by Suzy Wright and, right, *This Swan* by Karen Nicol



> ‘SPRINGALL POINTS TO THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD GROUNDING IN THE ART OF DRAWING TO UNDERPIN EVERY TEXTILE ARTWORK’

TALKS

Stitchcraft with Darren Ball, 30 March, 7pm-8.30pm, £12
Renowned textile artist Darren Ball will discuss the development of his practice and show additional samples of his work, as he explains how he exploits the restrictions of free-motion embroidery to create his images.

Empire of embroidery, 20 April, 7pm-8.30pm, £12
Writer and art historian Robert McCaffrey reveals how the monarchy has adapted embroidery to elevate royal occasions, funerals and coronations.

NB For a range of workshops, visit sunburygallery.org

BECOME A MEMBER

Gallery members are invited to talks, open evenings and exhibition previews at the gallery and receive a programme of forthcoming events. With 10% off in the gallery shop and 10% off ticketed talks, plus advance notification and priority booking, there are also members’ social evenings and a coffee loyalty card for use in the café. Annual membership is £25 for an individual or £35 for a family.

Call 01932 788101 or email info@sunburygallery.org

patchwork, tufting, machine tufting, *or nué* and couching. She points to the importance of a good grounding in the art of drawing to underpin every textile work. Her collection of some 270 pieces includes drawings, design sheets and final works. The collection focuses on artworks created as a direct result of embroidery being granted, in 1954, equal qualification status alongside painting, sculpture and illustration at Goldsmiths’ College, led by doyenne Constance Howard. Embroidery was now an art form in its own right, although the establishment has been slow to catch up.

Jessica Hemmings in her foreword to *An Embroiderers’ Eye* (2009) points out the unique acquisition strategy. ‘The Springall collection reflects its collector’s prescience in a number of ways. Firstly, it is vital to remember many of the familiar names that make up this collection were individuals at the very beginning of their careers when Springall first acquired examples of their work. Alice Kettle’s *Eve Falling from Grace* (1986), for example, was purchased at the conclusion of the artist’s studies at Goldsmiths’ College.

‘This foresight and confidence in careers that, in many cases, were taking their very first steps when Springall began collecting their work is indicative of not only her visual acuity but also her confidence and commitment to modern embroidery.

‘In more than one instance, this collection policy is known to have bolstered flagging spirits of talented individuals, who have gone on to establish professional careers in textiles. Thus, this collection stands as testament not only to an observant, but also a brave eye.’

BUILDING FOR BEAUTY

One influence on the existing gallery design was the 18th century curve of the Walled Garden, which also echoes in the new design, bringing views of the garden and park into the heart of the building. With an archive/study centre, large workshop space, the embroidery gallery and a space for visiting exhibitions, plus an excellent café with lovely terrace, the plans are exciting to view.

The new development will cost £3 million and it is anticipated that £250,000 can be raised from the community. Trustees will also submit an application to Your Fund Surrey (YFS) and other funders to help with the gallery transformation.

Community support of the application is crucial so people are asked to keep an eye on the website and social media and leave comments. Already, £125,000 has been raised from the community.

To donate to Sunbury Embroidery Gallery's fundraising programme visit SUNBURYGALLERY.ORG/FUTURE-EXPANSION

Sunbury Embroidery Gallery was awarded the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service for its work for the community, which was presented to them by HRH Princess Alexandra in 2019.

ariadne's thread

AN EMBROIDERY GROUP IS TAKING A STAND AGAINST RUSSIA'S INVASION OF UKRAINE, USING NEEDLE AND THREAD

■ AS THE WAR IN UKRAINE continues, a group of women are taking a stand against the Russian occupation, not with guns, but with needles and thread. The collective Ariadne's Thread was founded in March 2022 by Polish curator Magdalena Glowacka as a safe meeting place for Ukrainian women in Greater London and Surrey. Now it's an international network, with members in East Sussex, Germany, Poland, Sweden, Norway and Ukraine itself. And currently, they're working on *Blue Cornflowers…: a tapestry* to raise funds for Ukrainian refugees and awareness of Ukrainian culture, and Russia's attempts to erase it.

'It feels like you are a part of some beautiful mechanism that creates an art object and every stitch helps to find a picture that was dissolved in white canvas,' says Olga Ochkas, a Ukrainian fashion designer who currently lives in Germany, and who won the 2020 Hand and Lock Prize in the Fashion Open category. 'Creating something together with other people from around Europe motivates and makes you feel proud of your work. Also, it is very inspiring that so many people are interested in Ukrainian culture.'

Blue Cornflowers… is a large-scale reproduction of *Blue Cornflowers I Give To Ukraine*. It was created by celebrated folk artist Maria Prymachenko, 25 of whose works were destroyed in February 2022 when the Ivankiv Historical and Local History Museum was burned to the ground by Russian forces. Alongside Prymachenko's work, embroidery is an integral part of traditional Ukrainian culture.

'I was fond of needlework from school age,' says Galyna Shegynska, a massage therapist who still lives in Ukraine and who recently completed her part of the canvas. 'Sometimes I embroidered at work during my lunch break. It was like a reboot and healing therapy at the same time.'

Ariadne's Thread began when Glowacka asked a Ukrainian friend's mother to teach her embroidery. Their meetings grew rapidly and the pair became a collective, named for the mythical princess whose magical thread guides Theseus through the labyrinth. They are completing *Blue Cornflowers…* using a traditional cross-stitch technique, with thread purchased from DMC. The UK members are only working on one part of the canvas: another two are currently being stitched in Germany and Sweden.

Shegynska, who likes to have her beloved labrador dog by her side while she stitches, says that embroidery continues to be therapeutic for her. She says. 'When I embroider I calm down, visualise our victory and make plans for the future in Ukraine.'

Ochkas, who founded fashion label Moral Standards in 2018, has had similar experiences with her embroidery work. 'It is the best way of relaxation for me,' she says. 'It needs a lot of concentration, so you don't let your train of thought go too far, or you can make a mistake. At the same time, you can listen to music or audiobooks and enjoy this time. I would really recommend it as a way of therapy for those who need some kind of calmness in their life. You relax, create something unique, develop your concentration and patience abilities and increase your ability to endure stress.'

Meanwhile, Glowacka has managed to get in touch with several families in Ukraine who have children with autism. She has set up a fundraising page for them on JustGiving, and is encouraging the collective's supporters to donate what they can. 'What would I ever do if I found myself in this situation?' Glowacka wonders. 'And it's that sheer helplessness of listening and imagining and thinking about this horrible place where somebody can find themselves. It's the worst place you can be, not being able to keep your children safe. I still question even now, how is this helping anything or anybody?' She adds. 'Because I still feel helpless.'

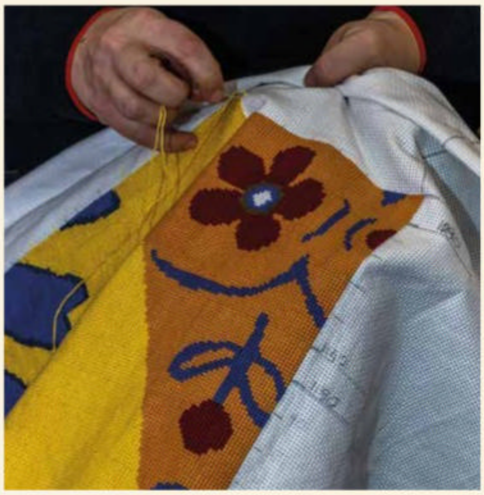
However, 2023 looks set to be a productive year for Ariadne's Thread. They have several exhibitions and workshops coming up in the UK, and Glowacka hopes that the finished tapestry might one day find a permanent, public home in Ukraine. Until then, she is determined to keep going: 'I always say that spreading awareness is the first step towards making a change.'

Emma Curzon

To find out more about the Ariadne's Thread project and to donate, visit
JUSTGIVING.COM/CROWDFUNDING/CORNFLOWERSTAPESTRYUKRAINE

INSTAGRAM @ARIADNESTHREAD2022

In Greek legend, Ariadne's ball of red thread helped Theseus find his way out of the labyrinth after killing the minotaur. The phrase also refers to the act of solving a problem through multiple means.



PHOTOS BY MAGDALENA GLOWACKA

MY KINGDOM FOR A ROBE

Historical costumier Ninya Mikhaila reveals her work on the film *The Lost King*, making clothes for Richard III, ahead of her online talk for the Embroiderers' Guild

The Lost King is a British comedy drama directed by Stephen Frears. Released in October 2022, the film tells the story of Phillipa Langley's quest in 2012 to find the bones of Richard III. Most of the cast are dressed in clothing of that time. However, Richard III, played by Harry Lloyd, appears throughout the film in the imagination of Phillipa and is dressed in 15th century-style clothing.

Ninya Mikhaila was brought on board on the recommendation of Tobias Capwell from the Wallace Collection, who was working as a historical advisor for the armoured scenes in the film. Ninya worked with costume designer Rhona Russell to create the clothing for the king.

Few records remain which detail the garments made for Richard by his tailors in the 15th century. However, details of five gowns made for him during his reign included one of purple cloth of gold and four of crimson cloth of gold. All were lined with satin, damask or velvet and suggest that, like his brother Edward IV, for whom records of clothing do survive, Richard had a love of fine clothes and used them to assert his kingship.

The gown worn by Richard throughout most of the scenes in the film is made from purple velvet and is lined with silk damask, with edging of faux fur. Purple velvet seemed appropriate as it was restricted by the acts of apparel to the monarch and his immediate family.

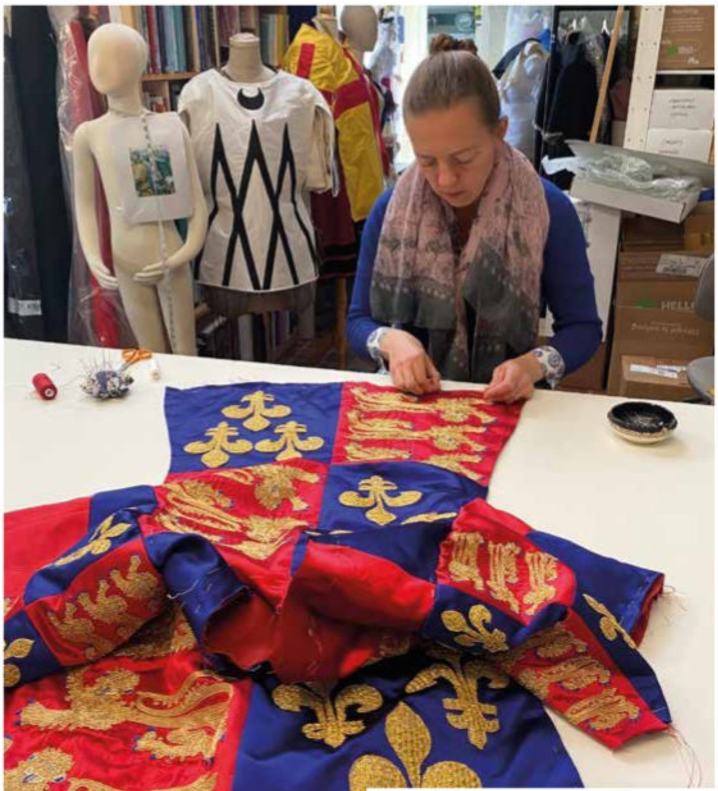
The gown made for the king's coronation in 1483 was cut from eight yards of purple velvet complete with ermine fur, powdered (spotted) with black lambskin.

In the film, the gown was worn over a skirted wine-red jacket made from a ribbed silk which represents camlet (a woven fabric of silk and hair), popular among the elite in the 15th century. The cut of the garments reflects a change in male tailoring in the 1480s, which moved away from some of the more colourful and extreme medieval fashions, with a new emphasis on natural shoulders and waistline and dark colours and furs.

Ninya also made the garments which were worn with the armour, seen at the end of the film. For armour to work properly it needs to be fitted over, and fastened to, a reinforced arming doublet. These were often made from strong, functional materials such as canvas, but those made for members of the royal family were of rich showy fabrics, so Rhona and Ninya chose a crimson red velvet for Richard.

The surcoat worn over the top of the armour was an important part of displaying the heraldry and rank of the wearer. Richard's was made from crimson and blue silk satin. Silk fabrics in these colours were heavily restricted by the acts of apparel and could only be worn by the elite. The surcoat was embroidered entirely by hand in gold metallic thread, with the quartered arms of England and France. The lions, which are properly called 'leopards' when depicted with faces turned toward the viewer, were embroidered in India and the fleur de lys were embroidered by Ninya Mikhaila.

The whole garment was lined in red linen and bound with silk damask. It is shaped to fit over the armour and laces down both sides, in order to achieve a close fit, a detail seen on several English effigies of armoured knights. The hose worn by Harry Lloyd were made by Gwen Nowrick of Historic Enterprises, his red leather shoes by NP Historical Shoes and his armour by Fred Ryall, supplemented by pieces from the collection of Mark Griffin.

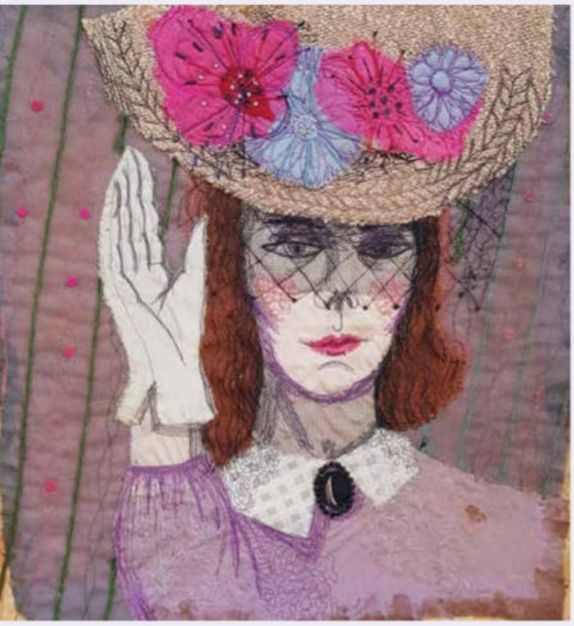


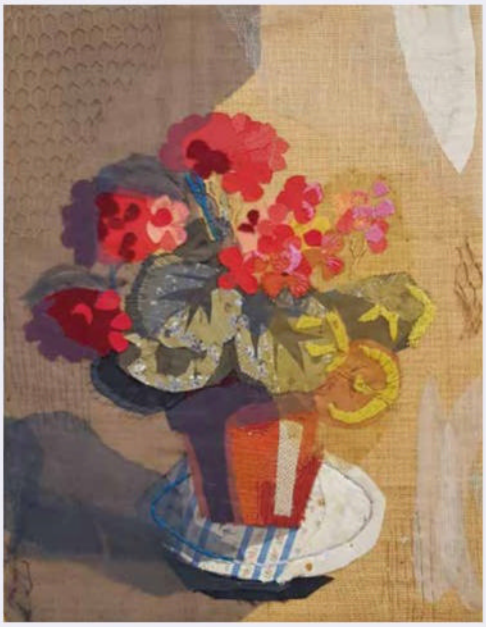
PATHE PRODUCTIONS LTD

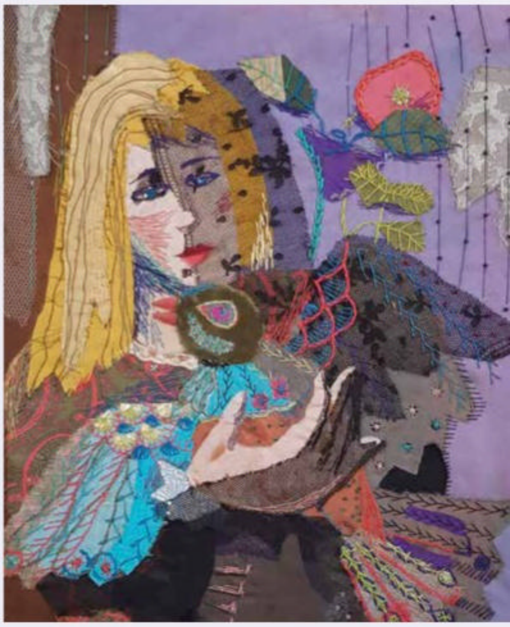
Above: Historical costumier Ninya Mikhaila in her studio with Richard III's red and blue surcoat, for which she embroidered the fleur de lys in gold thread. Ninya is set to give a talk for the Embroiderers' Guild on clothing in the reign of Elizabeth I on April 26

Right: Richard III was played by Harry Lloyd in *The Lost King*

Ninya Mikhaila's talk on decorative embellishment and sumptuary legislation during the reign of Elizabeth I is on April 26, 7pm-8.30pm, and is part of the Embroiderers' Guild online Thread Talks series. Book now at EMBROIDERERSGUILD.COM/THREAD-TALKS







a trip down memory lane...

The Embroiderers' Guild collection at Discover Bucks Museum represents an important and multi-faceted memory bank of textile art which is still being added to

■ Textile artists often talk of the 'memory of cloth', the way much-worn clothes and other fabrics take on the shape of their wearer or user, revealing the stress points and pattern of daily life. But if cloth has a memory beyond this, among the donations to the Embroiderers' Guild Collection at Discover Bucks Museum, there can be found story upon story of those who went before us, each piece holding the key to life at the very moment it was created.

The importance of the intimate feeling of connecting with the artist who made the artwork you hold in your hands can't be over-estimated. And holding artwork in your hands, doing away with that distanced separation of glass museum case and a light smattering of dust, is what the Guild's study collection is all about. Members and students can apply to see this collection. The history of embroidery is here, to support teaching and research and to provide inspiration.

Highly notable artworks are placed in the permanent collection. Of historical, cultural, social, technological or artistic significance, they can be varied in form, including costume, furnishings and art/craft objects.

The Guild receives regular donations, which can be seen in the exhibition Blooming Threads at Discover Bucks Museum.

Marjory Lewis's children were delighted by the textile artworks they uncovered after her death in 2020, at 94, and resolved to donate them to the Guild so they could be appreciated by a wider audience. But who was this quirky embroiderer of note?

Marjory's story begins with her mother, the free-spirited Alice Letitia Rae. A single mother, Alice supported her children through a successful business as a court dressmaker, following her husband's death when the children were young.

Recognising her children's talent, Alice encouraged Marjory and her brother, painter Robin Rae, to always follow their creativity.

Marjory met her husband, artist Conrad Lewis, at Ealing School of Art just after the war. It was here that they both studied fine art and painting and where, in 1949, Marjory gained a first-class certificate in City & Guilds embroidery, intermediate.

Having settled in Chester, where Conrad secured a teaching job at Chester School of Art, the couple brought up five children. Marjory spent any spare time studying, writing, knitting and making clothes. With a good eye for colour and fabric quality, she made clothes for her family, from tailored coats, dresses and blazers to skirts and jackets, as well as taking commissions for wedding and bridesmaids dresses from family and friends. As her children eventually left home, Marjory was able to teach fashion at Chester School of Art in the evenings.

While sorting through her possessions, the family came across the wonderful embroideries pictured here. It is thought they were made in the 1960s-1970s. The family recollects she used a little black Singer sewing machine with a plate fixed over the teeth so she could 'draw' freely. She hand-stitched some of the embroideries. They show a quirky and informed artist and are as fresh and relevant today as when they were made. The Guild marked the donation by creating bookmarks from *Lady with Hat*.

Marjory's artworks were exhibited at the Royal Cambrian Academy in the 1970s. She had incredible energy and loved art, antiques and literature, classical music, ballet, poetry, mythical stories and nature.

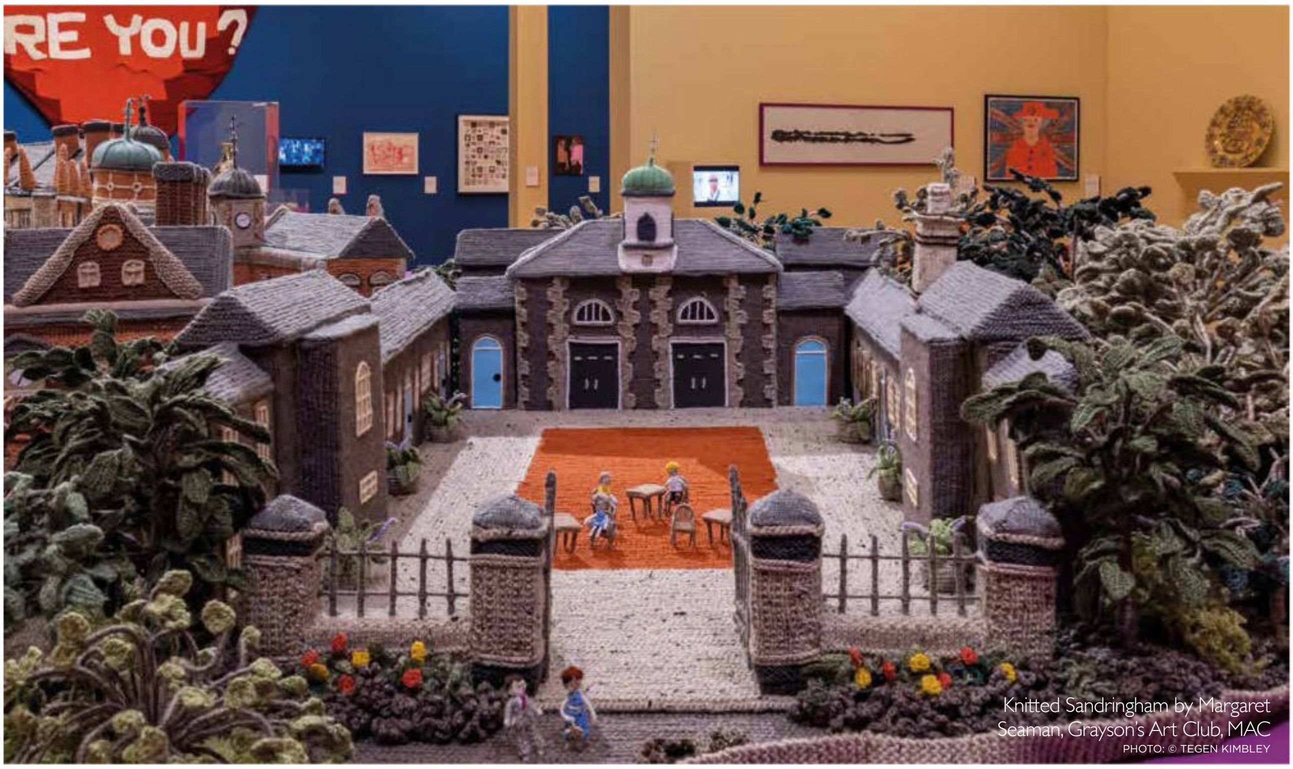
Following retirement, the couple moved to Hertfordshire. Her daughter, Joanna Lewis, says: 'She would have loved the Bucks Museum, especially the textiles section. I regret not visiting with her.'

Thanks to her family and The Embroiderers' Guild, Marjory's work can be enjoyed by generations as a record of her life and times. While four of her five children followed creative paths in life, Priscilla and Tessa studied fashion and textiles. The story of this adroit embroiderer and her family continues.

Anthea Godfrey, Guild artistic director, says: 'We owe it to the next generation to collect evidence of excellence and influence now.'

WWW.DISCOVERBUCKSMUSEUM.ORG

Donate to the Guild at embroiderersguild.com so they can continue this important work.



Knitted Sandringham by Margaret Seaman, Grayson's Art Club, MAC
PHOTO: © TEGEN KIMBLEY

GRAYSON'S ART CLUB
THE EXHIBITION III

Midlands Art Centre, Birmingham *2 December 2022 – 16 April 2023*

■ ONE OF THE BEST-KNOWN British artists working today, Sir Grayson Perry has made a career working across a range of media, notably ceramics and tapestry, and is famed for his sense of fashion, as well as his egalitarian approach to art.

This new exhibition at Midlands Art Centre in Birmingham comprises more than 100 eclectic works of art made by a handful of professional artists, popular celebrities, including comedians Jo Brand and Joe Lycett, but primarily by members of the British public who were selected from submissions to the third series of Perry's hit Channel Four TV series *Grayson's Art Club*.

The exhibition is divided into themes – love, holidays, the future and 'normal life' – broad enough to cover pretty much any artwork submitted. This openness is likewise reflected in the range of experience, skills and media shown, ranging from paintings and prints to photographs, sculpture and large-scale textile works.

One of the most memorable is the approximately five-metre-long *Knitted Sandringham* (2019-2020) by Margaret Seaman. This detailed reconstruction of the royal palace features knitted flower beds, buildings, courtyards and stables, wool-wrapped benches, tiny figures at leisure and elegant willow trees with draping tufts of wool. Each is lovingly and meticulously assembled.

Nearby is *How Are You? Heart* (2022) made by Cosby Yarn Bomb Community Members, a roughly four-metre-high wall-based collaborative work formed from knitted and crocheted squares. A video interview with the group's founders shares the sense of individual identity and community that has been created through the formation, clandestine installation and communal yarn bomb display of this and multiple other works produced in their Leicestershire village.

A particularly tender piece by Jo Riddle, Katharine Low and members of the UK AIDS Memorial Quilt Partnership is *AIDS Memorial Quilt* (2021). Made with painted fabrics, appliquéd sequins, ribbons, felt tip pins and laminated sheets fastened with safety pins, the patchwork quilt is a dedication to lives lost, a series of thank yous and a recognition for significant campaigning.

Scattered among works by professional and amateur artists are several by Sir Grayson Perry. A ceramic charger, vase and large un-glazed sculptural plant pot are joined by his colourful tapestry titled *Credit card, A13, Van Eyck, Microprocessor* (2022). The tapestry was made by digitally combining the 'stuff of normal life' as Perry would have it: 'money, commuting, marriage and the internet', layering images to make an abstracted whole. The familiar form and numerical characters of a credit card can be glimpsed, for instance, along with the figures from Jan van Eyck's oil on canvas *Arnolfini Portrait* (1434). The tapestry's patterning, size and textures link it closely to domestic textiles and soft furnishings.

Brightly coloured walls, interpretive videos and text panels recording the voices of artists emphasise accessibility, celebration and welcome. Challenging and sensitive issues are treated frequently with a sense of humour. Creativity for all is championed throughout. All this being said, it is a shame then, that while elements of the exhibition can be viewed freely, the central display carries an admission charge, both prohibitive to audiences and unusual for the gallery.

Anneka French

MACBIRMINGHAM.CO.UK

VERONICA RYAN
TURNER PRIZE 2022

Tate Liverpool 20 *October 2022 - 19 March 2023*

■ Veronica Ryan, born on the Caribbean island of Montserrat in 1956, has developed a distinctive visual art practice broadly concerned with place and our position within it. Ryan's Turner Prize-winning exhibition, one of four nominated for the award and currently on display at Tate Liverpool alongside fellow nominees Ingrid Pollard, Sin Wai Kin and Heather Phillipson, showcases some of the best of her work, namely her quietly powerful sculptures made using a mixture of natural and fabricated materials.

Ryan's sculptures are shaped by a process of collecting objects. Like a magpie she gathers cardboard produce trays, dried flowers, litter and other items, using these as inspiration for, or directly within, the making of new, often small-scale pieces. Textiles and textile processes are integral to the work, something which is influenced by the patchworks and embroidered pillowcases made by her mother that she recalls from her childhood. Indeed, several pieces here use household and medical pillows, combining these in stacked or piled multiples and with plaster to raise questions about texture, surface, use and value, along with the subjects of rest, memory and dreams.

Ryan's exhibition is situated within just one room and makes use of low plinths painted vibrant yellow and wooden shelving on which to display the 38 works. This, along with repetition in material and scale, help to formally tie the separate pieces together. Other support structures such as locker shelves and tall steel shelving units are incorporated into the sculptures themselves. On these are a mixture of materials, including cocoa pods, grapefruit skins, glazes made with volcanic ash, doilies, light bulbs and hand-embroidered fabrics, evocative materials relating to landscape and the home.

Crochet is used heavily. Vibrant pink, orange, red and yellow nets are made with crocheted cotton and with fishing line, for instance, and used as containers to hold small casts in plaster, wax and clay, along with seeds and fruit stones such as in *Drift Seeds* (2020) or *Fish nor Fowl* (2021). Her processes and materials are specific, reasoned and underpin the subjects of her work. While the seeds are connected to ideas of growth, nourishment and ancient knowledge, thread binding, nets and knots reference fishing and the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Hung from the ceiling are a series of four elongated net sculptures and in a recent interview on the work Ryan states: 'I'm tying them up from the ceiling using the sailors' knots I first came across on a residency in Cornwall which would have been used on the boats sailing across the Atlantic.' Past and present history is significant. The artist's work is informed by her own identity and ideas of migration; indeed, she moved to the UK as a child as part of the so-called Windrush Generation. Ryan currently divides her time between Bristol and New York, both cities redolent with histories of the migration of people, ideas, goods and technologies. Ryan admits that elements of her sculptures are made on long journeys between the two cities, passing the time with processes of crocheting and sewing, interweaving her ideas along the way.

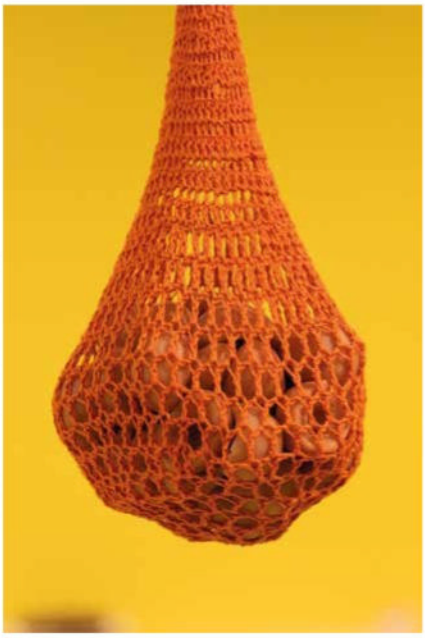
Anneka French

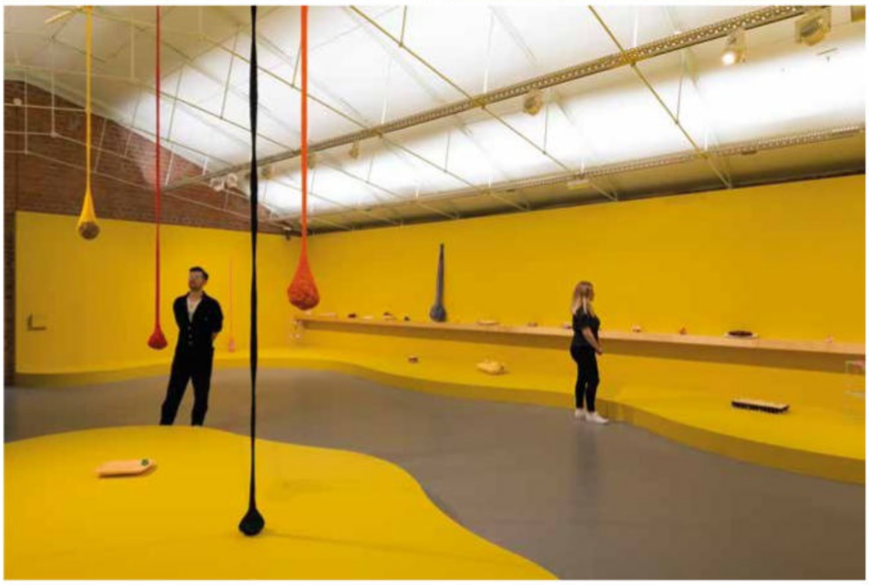
TATE.ORG.UK

Clockwise from right: Turner Prize 2022: Veronica Ryan *Untitled* (2020) Installation view at Tate Liverpool 2022
PHOTO: © TATE (MATT GREENWOOD)

Turner Prize 2022: Veronica Ryan installation view at Tate Liverpool 2022
PHOTO: © TATE (MATT GREENWOOD)

Bristol-based artist Veronica Ryan
PHOTO: © BRIAN ROBERTS IMAGES





MOTIVE/MOTIF

Ruthin Craft Centre *14 January – 16 April 2023*

■ A casualty of the Covid-19 pandemic, Ruthin Craft Centre's (RCC) showing of MOTIVE/MOTIF is a belated one. Conceived by the London College of Fashion (LCF) as a means of marking the 100th anniversary of the passing of the 1918 Representation of the People Act which legalised women's suffrage, it should have been exhibited in 2019. The genesis of the show's concept was a handkerchief embroidered in 1912 by 68 suffragettes then incarcerated in Holloway Prison. Taking what is a startlingly modest object as inspiration, LCF commissioned 20 artists to design an image which their specialist technicians then embroidered on to a handkerchief.

In addition to the 1912 handkerchief and the 20 commissioned pieces, MOTIVE/MOTIF also includes three wall-hung banners, a video screen showing footage of the coordinated 'living artwork' marches that took place in four UK cities on June 10 2018, and a copy of *Spare Rib* featuring an article about the feminist Barbara Miller's discovery of the Holloway handkerchief in a Sussex village jumble sale.

If it wasn't for three tall black cabinets placed in a line down the middle of Gallery Two, MOTIVE/MOTIF would be a bit of a mish-mash. Their sombre restraint helps to counteract the free-for-all, though celebratory, chaos of the two community-made banners. However, the third banner *Use Your Vote (Voice)* created by Bethan Hughes and Lisa Carter and commissioned by the RCC, with its minimal design and limited palette of suffragette colours, is exquisite.

As the show's blurb iterates, in the early 20th century the needle was still a potent means of communication for women. Crossing social and cultural barriers, sewing, for all its seeming benign domesticity, allowed women a radical voice – a trope that the First Wave Feminists re-visited so compellingly in the 1970s. Perhaps that's why the purely text-based artists' handkerchiefs are the most successful.

The simple clarity of Mona Hatoum's block-capital-ed repetition of the slogan WOMEN INSPIRING WOMEN INSPIRING, embroidered in brown and yellow (marking the often invisibility of people of colour in the fight for suffrage), resonates like an echo as the import of the words take root. By contrast, the discreetly ghostly white-on-white of Phoebe English's 'DEEDS NOT WORDS' speaks of a less demonstrative, more refined protest, but a protest nonetheless. Eschewing the two- for the three-dimensional, Jo Cope's piece is a tent-like structure emblazoned with the words 'BOLD, TIGHT, STRONG' worked in red. Mimicking the lined page of a school notebook, Ghada Amer's 'WE ARE THE GRANDDAUGTHERS OF THE WITCHES THAT YOU COULD NOT BURN' looks as if it's been written using a plastic letter stencil. The ubiquity of this lettering and her dividing up of the sentence into seven blocks initially hints at illiteracy (particularly with the misspelling of 'daughters'). It suggests a language given, not owned. But her separation of WIT from WITCHES implies a knowing that goes beyond erudition. It's clever work.

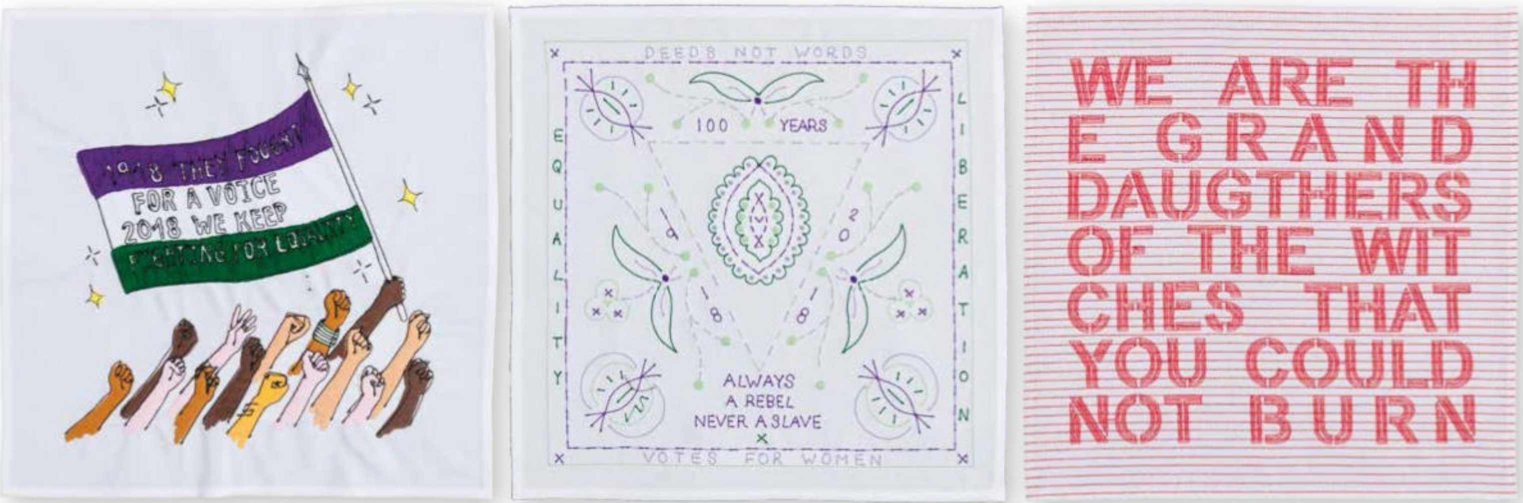
So many of the pieces are noteworthy, such as Celia Pym's characteristic mending in violet, green and white; Anthony Burrill's elegant appropriation of an antique lace handkerchief; Anila Rubiku's kaleidoscope of names of extraordinary women sewn onto lined mattress ticking and Sarah Lucas's 'doodle' of a pair of breasts.

And yet none can compare to the real thing. It's that, the original 1912 handkerchief, which stands you still: those tiny, tiny stitches from such monumental women.

Ellen Bell

RUTHINCRAFTCENTRE.ORG.UK/EXHIBITIONS/MOTIVE-MOTIF/

Ghada Amer, Chila Burman, Anthony Burrill, Jo Cope, Dorothy Cross, Phoebe English, Molly Goddard, Mona Hatoum, Charlotte Hodes, Anne Howeson, Peter Kennard, Sarah Lucas, Heather Phillipson, Celia Pym, Daniel Ramos, Anila Rubiku, Francesca Smith, Helen Storey, Sage Townsend and Rachel Whiteread.



RUTHINCRAFTCENTRE.ORG.UK

Above, l-r: Daniel Ramos employs the green, white and purple of the movement; Sage Townsend's work references the slogan 'Deeds not words'; while Ghada Amer plays with the text 'We are the granddaughters of the witches that you could not burn'

out and about

COURSES AND HOLIDAYS

1. GET AWAY FROM IT ALL IN FRANCE

With tutors including Anne Kelly, Liz Rogers and Amanda Hislop, Studio Preniac's textile holidays offer the perfect opportunity to relax while boosting your creativity. Set in the stunning, tranquil Lot region of South-West France, Studio Preniac has a small lake and a swimming pool, while nearby are medieval/bastide towns and villages to visit.
STUDIOPRENIAC.COM

2. ENJOY AN ONLINE NEEDLEWORK FESTIVAL

If you don't fancy travelling, you can catch up with Lady Anne's Needlework Festival online from the comfort of your armchair or kitchen table. During live classes over Zoom, tutors will demonstrate techniques, with each student receiving a kit in advance of the class so you can stitch along and ask any questions you may have. From 9 to 16 May.
LADYANNESNEEDLEWORK.COM

3. TAKE OFF FOR THE STATES

Felted birds with mixed media artist Tory Brokenshire is at the Wacky Nut Farm Studio on Bainbridge Island, a 30-minute ferry ride from Seattle, and sounds delightful. Organised by Kathie Vezzani of Bellissima Art Escapes, this break is the perfect opportunity to be inspired by new surroundings and Tory's eclectic bird creations.
BELLISSIMAARTESCAPES.COM

4. START IN STOCKHOLM

In September, Opulent Quilt Journeys puts the luxury into creative travel with a textile tour of Sweden. Suzie Liles will guide you around the country's fibre traditions, including their rich history of folk art. The tour starts in Stockholm with a trip to Sweden's only remaining silk mill.
OPULENTQUILTJOURNEYS.COM

5. PICK UP PALESTINIAN EMBROIDERY

Lizzy Vartanian Collier will concentrate on flora and fauna while teaching students to customise a garment or piece of fabric with traditional Palestinian embroidery on 15 April, 10am-1pm, £40. To book a place call 01932 788101 or email INFO@SUNBURYGALLERY.ORG

6. BOOK A SHORT GUILD WORKSHOP

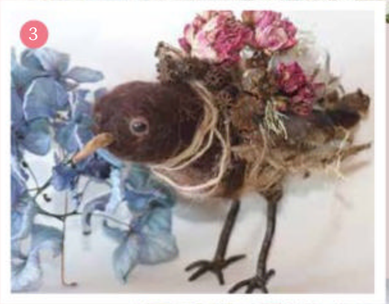
The Embroiderers' Guild is offering a series of short workshops free to members, with a suggested donation of £10-£15 for non-members – which are too good to miss.
On 14 March, Elnaz Yazdani gives an introduction to hand-stitched line and mark-making. The stitches can be applied to pieces of cloth, clothing or accessories.
On 4 April, Felicity Alice will look at distorting stitches. Participants will explore a range of versatile stitches, swapping materials to achieve different outcomes.
On 18 April, Cas Holmes will focus on text as part of a sometimes 'hidden, yet seen narrative' which forms part of the conceptual process of her pieces.
EMBROIDERERSGUILD.COM/WORKSHOPS

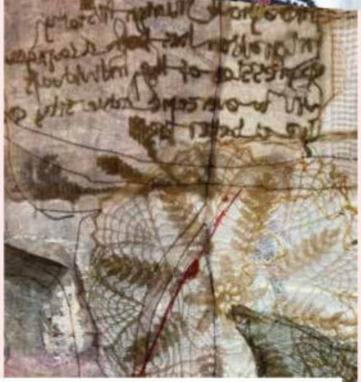
7. LISTEN TO STITCHERY STORIES TALKS

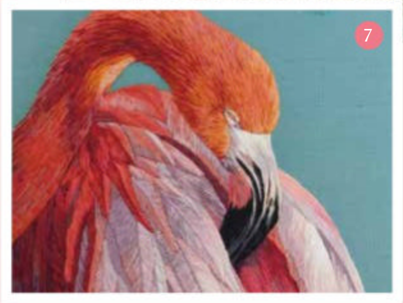
The Embroiderers' Guild also runs an online series called Talking Threads, featuring two artists in discussion with Stitchery Stories podcast host Susan Weeks.
On 18 March, Amy Burt: Lady B Embroidery talks about her life and career, from the disco to the RSN, and everything in between. Online 2pm-3.30pm.
On 26 April, Ninya Mikhaila talks about decorative embellishment and sumptuary legislation during the reign of Elizabeth I. Ninya featured in the TV series *A Stitch in Time* and will share insights into decorative detailing on clothes and accessories for ordinary people in the late 16th century. Online 7pm-8.30pm.
EMBROIDERERSGUILD.COM/THREAD-TALKS

8. TRY A KIT-BASED WORKSHOP

The Embroiderers' Guild is also offering kit-based workshops. On 17 April, Emma Broughton of Fairy Wren Embroidery will lead an introduction to goldwork, focusing on her lovely strawberry design. The workshop will be presented by Emma through pre-recorded videos and a pdf. Emma will provide support to students via a forum, open until 17 June.
EMBROIDERERSGUILD.COM/WORKSHOPS







what's on

On show

AYLESBURY Blooming Threads: A new exhibition delving into the Embroiderers' Guild Collection to reveal fascinating and inspiring examples of stitched flowers. Until 2024. Discover Bucks Museum, Church Street HP20 2PQ discoverbucksmuseum.org

BATH Threads Through Creation until 19 March. Bath Abbey BA1 1LT. bathabbey.org

BIRKENHEAD Michael Brennand-Wood's Lace Works: The Encirclement of Space until 18 March. Williamson Art Gallery and Museum, Slatey Road, Merseyside CH43 4UE. williamsonartgallery.org

BIRMINGHAM Grayson's Art Club: The Exhibition III (booking essential) until 16 April. Midlands Arts Centre B12 9QH. macbirmingham.co.uk

BOVEY TRACEY Amanda Glendenning: As Above So Below until 15 April. MAKE Southwest, Riverside Mill, Devon TQ13 9AF. crafts.org.uk

BRUTON New Bend: work inspired by the Gee's Bend quilters, until 8 May. Hauser & Wirth, Durslade Farm, Dropping Lane, Somerset BA10 0NL hauserwirth.com

CWMBRAN Pretty: monstrous feminine forms by Jess Parry until 22 April. Llantarnam Grange, St David's Road NP44 1PD. llantarnamgrange.com

DUNDEE Tartan 1 April-14 January 2024. V&A Dundee, 1 Riverside Esplanade DD1 4EZ. vam.ac.uk/dundee

EDINBURGH Knitwear: Chanel to Westwood until 11 March. Kaffe Fassett 31 March-8 July. Dovecot Studios, 10 Infirmary St EH1 1LT. dovecotstudios.com

EDINBURGH Bernat Klein: Design in Colour until 23 April. National Museum of Scotland, Chambers St EH1 1JF. nms.ac.uk

FARNHAM Dancing in the Womb: Rezia Wahid until 13 May. Falkner Rd, Farnham, Surrey, GU9 7DS. csc.uca.ac.uk

GATESHEAD Hew Locke's The Procession until 11 June. BALTIC Gateshead NE8 3BA. baltic.art

HIDCOTE Colour with Kaffe until 25 March. Near Chipping Sodbury, Gloucester GL55 6LR. nationaltrust.org.uk/hidcote

KIRCUDBRIGHT Open Edge by Edge Textile Artists Scotland, promoting excellence in textile art, 2-22 April. Harbour Cottage Gallery, Castle Bank, Scotland. edge-textileartists-scotland.com

Creatures of the night

Katarzyna Kajukało-Drygalska has hand-embroidered 100 moths as part of the #100fluffymoths art project to reveal the beauty and variety of these creatures and get them the profile they deserve. Katarzyna says: 'Each piece is framed in an authentic entomological frame, causing even professionals to give me one of the best compliments I can get: "I thought they were real."'
Inspired by species from Polish fauna, the project demonstrates moths are no different to butterflies when it comes to beauty.
Katarzyna sees her art as a conservation tool: 'My project draws attention to the alarming decline in moth populations and allows us to admire nature without harming it.'
An exhibition will take place on 22 April at 1pm at the Nature Education Centre of the Jagiellonian University, Kracow, Poland. MUZEAUCZELNIANE.PL

LA SIRENE
CONSTANT

KINGS LYNN Progression in Textiles Exhibition, with some sales tables, 30 June-2 July. St Nicholas's Chapel, St Anne's Street, Norfolk PE30 1LT

LIVERPOOL Turner Prize 2022 until 19 March. Tate Liverpool, Royal Albert Dock L3 4BB. tate.org.uk

LONDON Africa Fashion until 16 April. *Plus*, Hallyu! The Korean Wave until 25 June and Beguiling Beni (the Japanese dye 'beni') until 31 March. V&A Museum, Cromwell Road SW7 2RL. vam.ac.uk

LONDON A Girl's Education in Stitch until 18 May. Royal School of Needlework studios, Hampton Court Palace KT8 9AU. *Selected dates only*. www.royal-needlework.org.uk

LONDON Andy Warhol: The Textiles 31 March-10 September. Fashion and Textile Museum, 83 Bermondsey Street SE1 3XF. fashionandtextilemuseum.org

LONDON Kumihimo: Japanese Silk Braiding by DOMYO, until 11 June. Japan House London, 101-111 Kensington High Street W8 5SA. japanhouselondon.uk

LONDON Magdalena Abakanowicz: Every Tangle of Thread and Rope until 21 May. *Plus* Hyundai commission: Cecilia Vicuna until 16 April. Tate Modern, Bankside SE1 9TG. tate.org.uk

LONDON Souls Grown Deep Like the Rivers (includes Gee's Bend quilters) 17 March-18 June. Royal Academy, Burlington House, Piccadilly W1J 0BD. royalacademy.org.uk

LONDON Weird Sensation: Feels Good until 10 April. Plus, Sneakers Unboxed until 9 April and Yinka Illori: Parables for Happiness until 25 June. Design Museum, 224-238 Kensington High St W8 6AG. designmuseum.org

LONDON Xadie Xa: House Gods until 30 April. Whitechapel Gallery, 77-82 Whitechapel High St, E1 7QX. whitechapelgallery.org

MACCLESFIELD Print: A Passion for Pattern until 24 July. The Silk Museum, Park Lane SK11 6TJ. macclesfieldmuseums.co.uk

MANCHESTER Dandy Style until 1 May. Manchester Art Gallery, Mosley Street M2 3JL. manchesterartgallery.org

NEWTOWN It's Raining Elderly Ladies and Sticks: Ruth Jên Evans, Luned Rhys Parri and Julie Arkell, Foyer Gallery until 30 April, Oriel Davies, The Park, Powys SY16 2NZ. orieldavies.org

NORTHWICH Salt of the Earth by Threadmill Textile Artists, 19 March-10 July, Iron Salt Works, Ollershaw Lane, Marston CW9 6ES (closed on Mondays) threadmill.org.uk

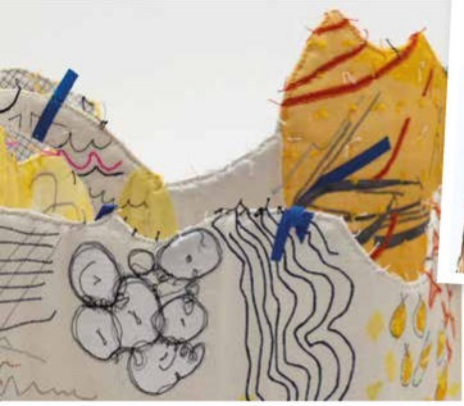
PEEBLES Making: 50, The Textile Study Group on its 50th anniversary, 1 April-5 August. Tweeddale Museum and Gallery, High Street EH45 8AG

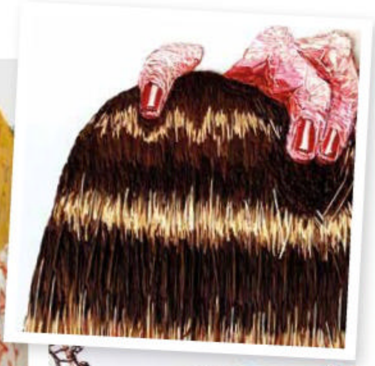
PETERBOROUGH Threads Through Creation: Jacqui Parkinson, 22 March-30 April. Peterborough Cathedral PE1 1XS. peterborough-cathedral.org.uk

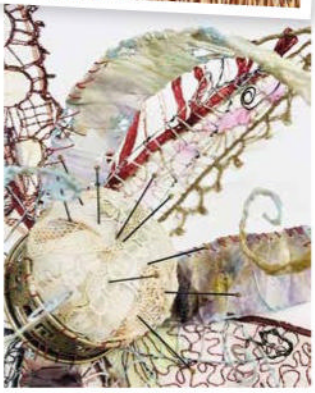
RUTHIN Motive/Motif: Artists Commemorate the Suffragettes until 19 March. Ruthin Craft Centre, Denbighshire LL15 1BB. ruthincraftcentre.org.uk

RUTHIN Drawing on Indigo: Jeanette Orrell 22 April-2 July. Ruthin Craft Centre, Denbighshire LL15 1BB ruthincraftcentre.org.uk

SEDBURGH Exspiravit, Mixed media textile exhibition by Decorum, a contemporary response to the Rachel Kay Shuttleworth at Gawthorpe Hall, until April 2. Wed-Sun only, 10.30am-4pm. Free entry. Farfield Mill, Garsdale Road, Cumbria LA10 5LW. farfieldmill.org





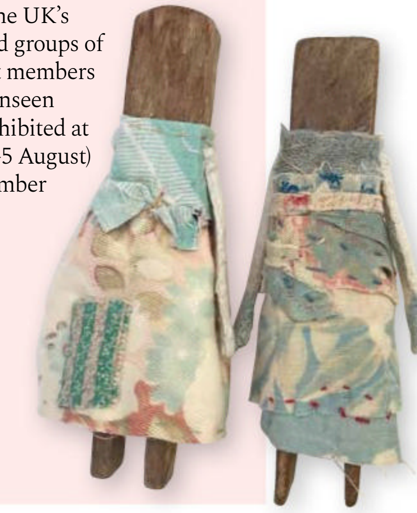


Fifty dolls to celebrate 50 years

The Textile Study Group is celebrating its 50th birthday this year. The group, which started in 1973, under the auspices of Constance Howard, was established to support tutors in embroidery. Since then, the group has evolved and grown in stature and is now one of the UK's most prestigious and well-recognised groups of textile artists and tutors. The current members have produced previously new and unseen work in celebration which will be exhibited at Tweeddale Gallery, Peebles (1 April–5 August) and The Ropewalk, Barton upon Humber (16 September–26 November).

Artist Mandy Pattullo has made 50 peg dolls dressed in the unpicked and fragile pieces of quilt which are the trademark of her practice. Using traditional romany pegs they refer to her childhood memory of her grandmother buying pegs from gypsies and making dolls for Mandy.

TEXTILESTUDYGROUP.CO.UK



Above l-r: *La Sirene* by Myrlande Constant at Hauser & Wirth

From Blooming Threads: Embroiderer's Guild Collection at Discover Bucks Museum

Hazel Grove by Elizabeth Brimelow, Material Evidence at The Hub, Sleaford

Pretty by Jess Parry, Llantarnam Grange

Right: *Pimpilowe* by Priscilla Edwards, Exspiravit, Farfield Mill, Sedburgh

SEDBURGH Once Upon a Thread: Int'l Textiles Exhibition until 19 March. Farfield Mill, Garsdale Road, Cumbria LA10 5LW. Wed-Sun. farfieldmill.org

SLEAFORD Material Evidence: A Quilt Art Exhibition, 1 April-9 July, Main Gallery, The Hub, Navigation Wharf, Carre Street, Lincolnshire NG34 7TW. hub-sleaford.org.uk

SOMERTON Amy Bonsor's Movement, Multiples and Margins: abstract, tactile works employing repetition and stitched construction, 18 March-22 April. ACE Arts, Market Place TA11 7NB. acearts.co.uk

STOCKPORT Hats off to the Mersey: a stitch and mixed media exhibition by Threadmill, 11 March-22 April. Open Sat-Wed. Stockport War Memorial Art Gallery, Wellington Road South SK3 8AB. stockport.gov.uk

WAKEFIELD Andie Walker: Stitched Stories until 25 June. Yorkshire Sculpture Park Centre, West Bretton, W Yorkshire WF4 4LG ysp.org.uk

WALTON ON THAMES Diversity present Surface: Tension, 10-21 May. Meet the artists on 13 May, 10am-3pm. Riverhouse Barn Gallery, Surrey KT12 2PF

WOOLER Celebration of Textiles: diverse work by contemporary textile artists from Cornwall to Fair Isle, 1 April-27 May. Gallery@No.6, 6 High Street, Northumberland, NE71 6BY. Open Tues-Sat. galleryatno6.co.uk

Events

BIRMINGHAM Head over to @embroidery_mag on Instagram to win one of three pairs of tickets to Sewing for Pleasure, Fashion and Embroidery and the Creative Craft Shows, 16-19 Mar. Pick up advice from contestants from the BBC's *Great British Sewing Bee* at the Juki Sewing Celebs workshops, plus discover Clive Bruder's We Sew Too, aimed at breaking down gender stereotypes. Watch free demos and shop the latest stitching supplies, fabrics, yarns, patterns and threads. NEC, B40 1NT. creativecraftshow.co.uk

LEEDS Threads Textile Festival 12-14 May. Market with 50-plus suppliers and makers, exhibition by 62 Group, speaker and workshop programme, fashion show and archive tours. Sunnybank Mills, West Yorkshire sunnybankmills.co.uk

LONDON The Stitch Festival 23-26 March: knitting, crochet, dressmaking, quilting and needlecraft in over 230 hands-on workshops, displays and shopping. Business Design Centre N1 0QH. thestitchfestival.co.uk

Overseas

CHICAGO Natural consequences: The geoscience embroideries of Bonnie Peterson until 15 October. Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, USA. naturemuseum.org

LODZ 17th International Triennial of Lodz 2022 until 15 April. Central Museum of Textiles in Łódź, 282 Piotrkowska Street, 93-034 Poland. cmwl.pl

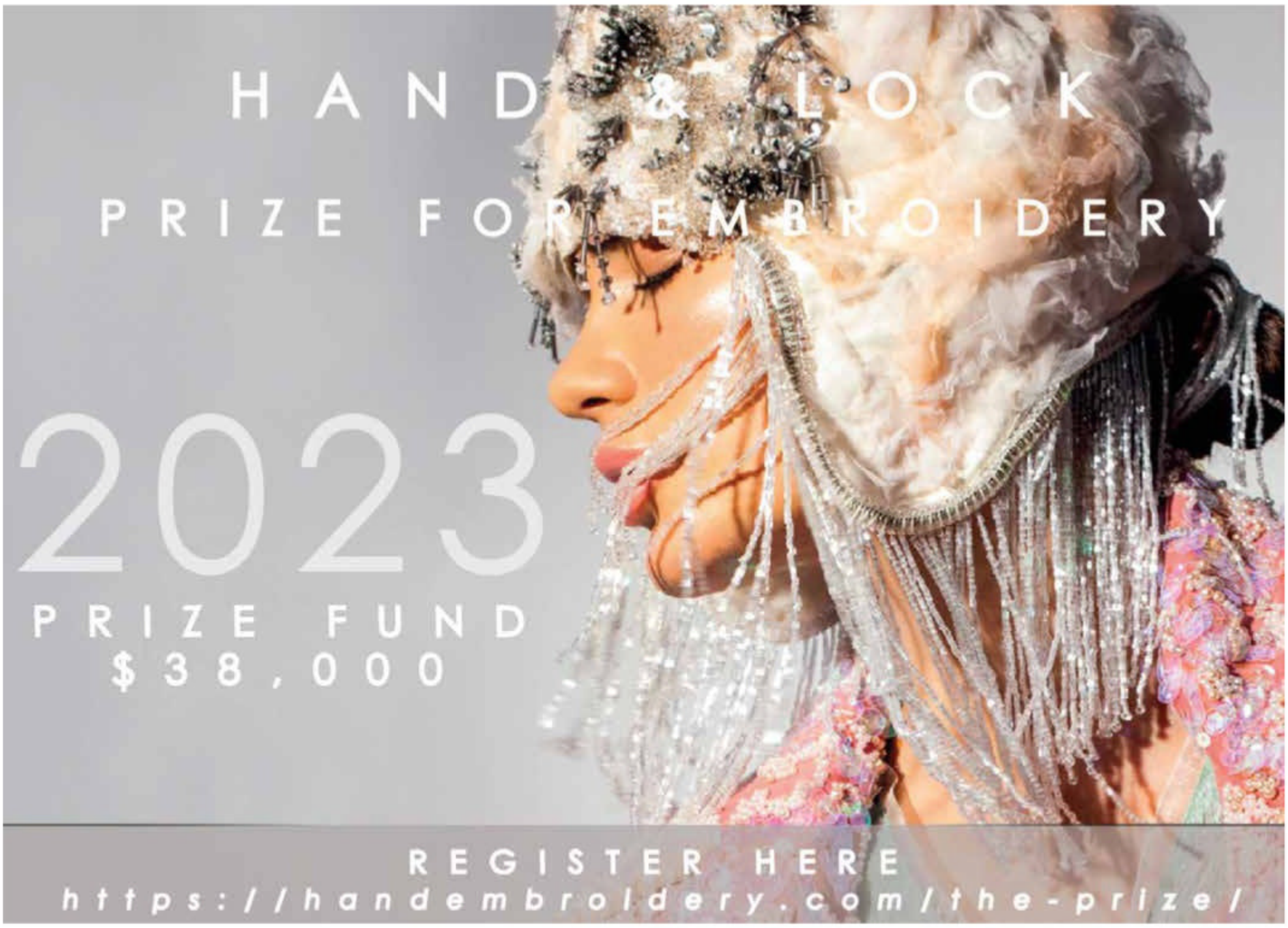
NEW YORK Artists Ana de la Cueva and Mathew Lopez-Jensen asked 100 volunteers to stitch their visions of a greener future Broadway corridor on to 10in squares. The 15ft long Tibbetts Estuary Tapestry is displayed in an 18th century farmhouse in the Bronx until the end of March. Cityaslivinglab.org

Future shows

LONDON Embroidered Arts Exhibition 2023, 16-19 November, Bargehouse, Oxo Tower Wharf. After a hugely successful Embroidered Arts Exhibition in 2021, The Hand & Lock Prize for Embroidery returns for its second exhibition celebrating global embroidery in fashion and textile arts. See the finalists for the 2022 and 2023 prize for embroidery. A further three floors will exhibit embroidered arts by the best emerging designers, on display for five days only. For early-bird tickets head to handembroideryshop.com/products/embroidered-arts-general-admissions-early-bird

Exhibition dates may be subject to change. Many galleries insist on advance booking. Please check with the venue before making your journey.

JANOME
Go ahead... get creative!
World's leading sewing machine manufacturer
janome.co.uk


HAND & LOCK
PRIZE FOR EMBROIDERY
2023
PRIZE FUND
$38,000
REGISTER HERE
https://handembroidery.com/the-prize/

SCREENS 4 PRINTING

READY-MADE AND CUSTOM SCREENS, SQUEEGEES AND INKS

Print your own design or choose one of ours

Thermofax screens are lightweight, easily handled, and used like a silk screen. They are perfect for printing finely detailed images on to fabric and many other surfaces.

Combined with our inks, you can print imagery creating great backgrounds for hand or machine stitching, or repeat many times to make up embroidery kits. Or you can create fabulous cloth for use in home furnishings or clothing.

We can make a screen from your own design, or you can choose from our extensive image library.

www.screens4printing.com

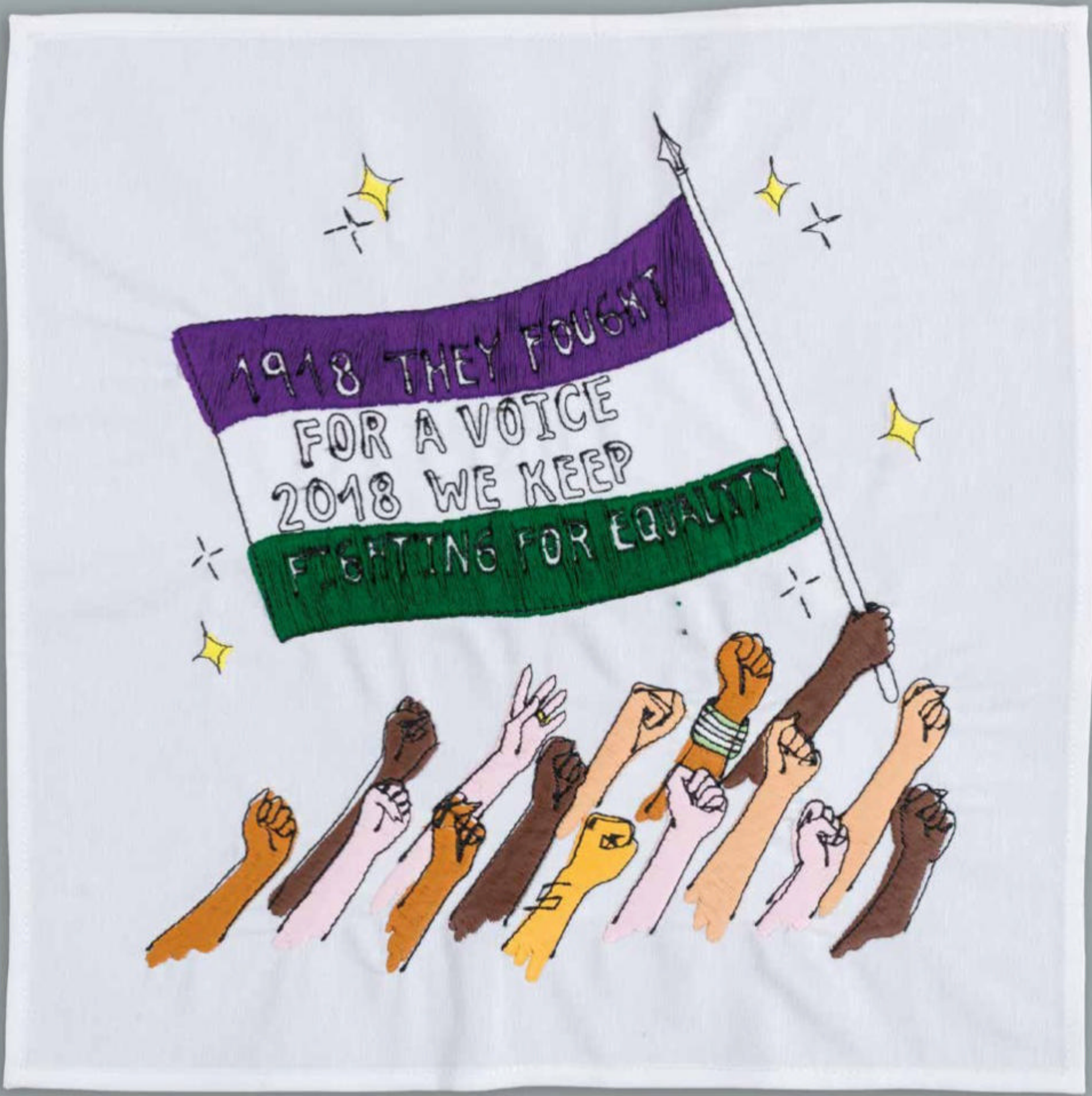
e: info@screens4printing.com | screens4printing

Unique Embroidery Kits & Supplies at Little House of Victoria

Embroidery Kits with interesting threads and pure linen panels for complete beginners to advanced
20% off your first order with code WELCOME20

LITTLE HOUSE OF VICTORIA
V

www.littlehouseofvictoria.com



Motive / Motif:

Artists Commemorate the Suffragettes

Ghada Amer, Chila Burman, Anthony Burrill, Jo Cope, Dorothy Cross, Phoebe English, Molly Goddard, Mona Hatoum, Charlotte Hodes, Anne Howeson, Peter Kennard, Sarah Lucas, Heather Phillipson, Celia Pym, Daniel Ramoso, Anila Rubiku, Francesca Smith, Helen Storey, Sage Townsend and Rachel Whiteread.

Curated by Charlotte Hodes and Alison Moloney.

The significance of the image on the handkerchief goes far beyond this modest embroidered object.

Its beauty belies the women's struggle and suffering whilst revealing their bond with the embroidered word.

Gallery 2, 14 January 2023 – 16 April 2023

Ruthin Craft Centre, The Centre for the Applied Arts

Park Road, Ruthin, Denbighshire, Wales UK, LL15 1BB. Tel: +44 (0)1824 704774
FREE admission. FREE on-site parking. Open Tuesday – Sunday, 10am – 5.30pm
www.ruthincraftcentre.org.uk Instagram: @ruthincrafts Twitter: @Ruthin_crafts

Canolfan Grefft Rhuthun
Y Ganolfan i'r Celfyddydau Cymhwysol
Ruthin Craft Centre
The Centre for the Applied Arts

hamdden leisure

Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru, Arts Council of Wales

sir ddinbych denbighshire

Supported by The National Lottery through the Arts Council of Wales

Cefnogwyd gan Y Loteri Genedlaethol trwy Gyngor Celfyddydau Cymru

image: Borja Moronta, courtesy of the artist.

subscribe today
EMBROIDERY MAGAZINE

Embroidery is the only magazine dedicated to embroidery and art textiles. Every issue is packed with interviews, news, reviews and trends – we talk to the artists, makers and designers who matter.

THE TEXTILE ART MAGAZINE
embroidery
Blue-sky thinking
AMANDA MCCAVOUR
QUEEN BEE
ESME YOUNG'S SEWING ROOM
David Morrish's TV times
DANCING IN THE WOMB
REZIA WAHID
An Indigo Summer
MEET PRISM TEXTILES GROUP
Exuberant Maori artists
LISSY & RUDI
UK £6.99
March April 2023

THE TEXTILE ART MAGAZINE
embroidery
Bright ideas
LIBBY ASHDOWN
HAPPY NEW YEAR! Preview of 2023
A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN
Liz Cooksey
Sculptures in thread
PIPPA HAYNES
Bigging up cross stitch
RAQUEL RODRIGO
Oh knickers!
VICTORIA MCINTOSH
UK £6.99
January February 2023

OBTAIN YOUR COPY

Purchase six issues of the print magazine including free delivery for only £34.99*
Call the hotline on 01778 392 468

Subscribe, renew and purchase back issues at
mymagazinesub.co.uk/embroidery

You can purchase digital copies at
pocketmags.com/embroidery-magazine

or subscribe via shop.exacteditions.com/embroidery-magazine
to access digitally current issue plus all previous issues over the last 90 years

*UK rate

EMBROIDERYMAGAZINE.CO.UK

Harbour Cottage Gallery
Kirkcudbright
Open Edge '23
3rd April - 22nd April
open daily 10.30am - 5pm
Edge Textile Artists Scotland promoting excellence in Textile Art

Cleopatra's Needle
Exclusive Needlecraft Kits
Appletons
4 ply Tapestry & 2 ply Crewel Wool
423 colours - buy hanks or ½ hanks
Easy online ordering www.cleopatrasneedle.co.uk
Or email sales@cleopatrasneedle.co.uk

Korry's Little Shop
Goldwork & Embroidery Supplies
Hand Embroidery Tutor
Embroidery and textile art supplies, goldwork wires.
Aurifil, Madeira and Presencia stockist. Embroidery kits
Thread box subscriptions. Live online classes.
5% off your order with discount code EMB
www.korrylittleshop.co.uk
email: info@korrylittleshop.co.uk

Princess
THE PRINCESS PLEATER
Manual pleating machine for smocking, shibori and creative textiles
Give your designs the professional finish
Order now at : www.princess-pleaters.co.uk
FOR ENQUIRIES CONTACT : +44 (0) 1253 733842
MADE IN GREAT BRITAIN

Studio Préniac
Fully Catered Creative Textiles Holidays
in South West France

Join our fully-catered, tutor-led Creative Textile holidays, set in a stunning and tranquil part of South West France.

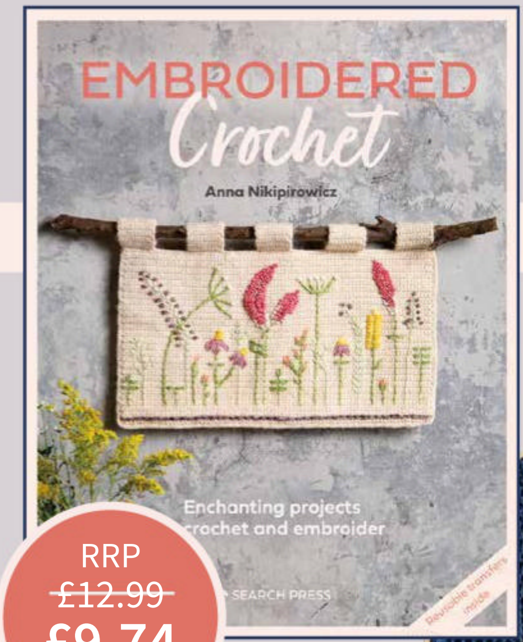
Develop skills and confidence, have fun, relax and enjoy a week of creativity, good food and great company.

AMANDA HISLOP
4th - 11th May 2023
ANNE KELLY
1st - 8th June 2023
ANN STEPHENS
15th - 22nd June 2023
RUTH ISSETT
29th June - 6th July 2023
SUE STONE
7th - 14th September 2023
ALICE FOX
30th September - 7th October 2023

For further details, contact Chris & Nicki
www.studiopreniac.com +33 (0) 6 30 05 54 45 info@studiopreniac.com
SIRET: 878 449 156 00016

ISBN: 9781782219712

EMBROIDERED Crochet


EMBROIDERED
Crochet
Anna Nikipirowicz
Enchanting projects
to crochet and embroider
SEARCH PRESS
Reusable transfers inside

RRP

~~£12.99~~

£9.74

Anna Nikipirowicz

Enchanting projects to crochet and embroider

Double crochet forms a dense, firm base that's ideal for stitching on using either crochet yarn or stranded cotton. The effect is a beautiful, textured, raised design that combines the delicacy and charm of embroidery with the soft, tactile feel of crochet.

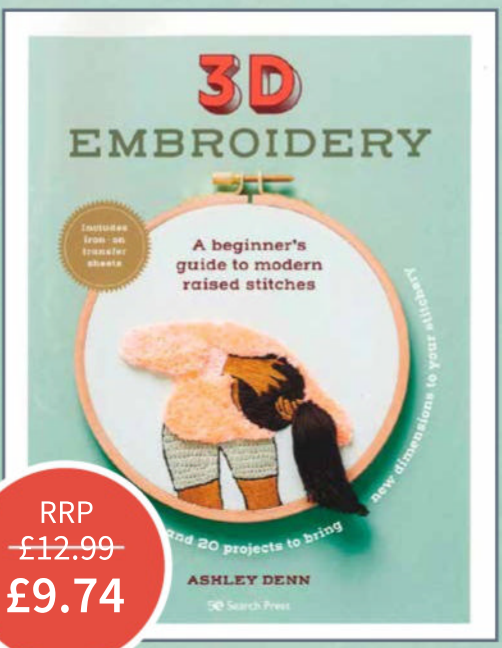
Beginning with a basic introduction to the stitch instructions for both crochet and embroidery, delve into a collection of 10 pretty projects. Discover an enchanting meadow-themed tapestry, a basket set emblazoned with roses, enchanting mushroom bunting and more.

March 2023

3D EMBROIDERY

Ashley Denn

A beginner's guide to modern raised stitches, *3D Embroidery* is a curated collection of over 30 raised embroidery stitches and techniques, taught within the context of 20 in-hoop embroidery projects. The patterns featured offer contemporary designs for today's modern maker.


3D
EMBROIDERY
Includes iron-on transfer sheets
A beginner's guide to modern raised stitches
...and 20 projects to bring new dimensions to your stitchery
ASHLEY DENN
Search Press

RRP

~~£12.99~~

£9.74

ISBN: 9781800921252

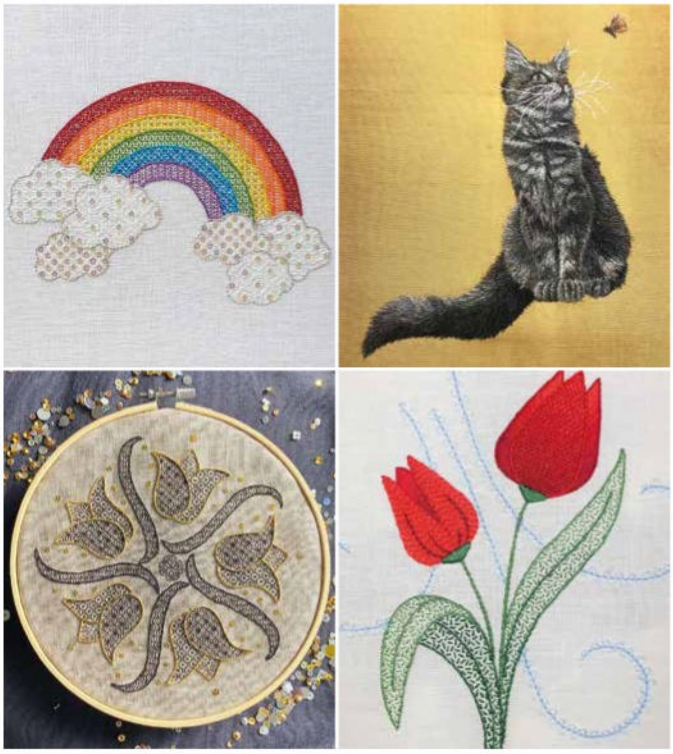
Order your copies now and use the code EGBOOKS25 for 25% off!*

www.searchpress.com

* Offer ends 31st May 2023, while stocks last. Promo code cannot be used in conjunction with other offers. Free UK P&P on orders over £20.

50 SEARCH PRESS LIMITED
The world's finest art and craft books

Follow us on:



RSN
ROYAL SCHOOL OF NEEDLEWORK
150 YEARS
Founded 1872

Learn the Art of Hand Embroidery

With the Royal School of Needlework

- Onsite & Live Online Day & Evening Classes
- Wide choice of beautiful designs
- All levels welcome from beginner to advanced
- Expert tuition from the centre of excellence
- Goldwork, Silk Shading, Jacobean Crewelwork, Stumpwork, Blackwork & many more
- Online Talks also available

w: royal-needlework.org.uk e: education@royal-needlework.org.uk

RSN is a registered charity no: 312774

RAINBOW Silks
www.rainbowsilks.co.uk
01494 727003

PROCION MX DYE

30 YEARS
Celebrating 30 years supplying textile artists

Creative Textiles – Fabric Dyeing, Painting & Printing – Creative Embroidery – Silk Painting – Felt Making – Mixed Media and more

To advertise in
Embroidery Magazine
please contact

Beverley Carter
020 3137 8582
bev@media-shed.co.uk

MEDIA SHED

embroidery
Bright ideas
embroidery
Blue-sky thinking
AMANDA MCCAVOUR

ZWEIGART®
since 1877

Premium needlework fabrics
Unique selection of plain and printed AIDA,
evenweave & linens.
100 % Made in Germany
www.zweigart.de/colorworlds

"Sometime in Spring"
ZWEIGARTNEEDLEWORKFABRICS

For stockists contact:
Lakeside Needlecraft I lakesideneedlecraft.co.uk I Willow Fabrics I www.willowfabrics.com
Heritage Crafts I Tel: 01889 575 256 I Woolwarehouse I woolwarehouse.co.uk
Stitchtastic I www.stitchtastic.com

BOOK NOW

THREADS
TEXTILE FESTIVAL

A CELEBRATION OF TEXTILES AT SUNNY BANK MILLS IN WEST YORKSHIRE

FRI 12TH – SUN 14TH MAY 2023

Market with 50+ craft suppliers, makers and demonstrations
Tailored exhibition by the 62 Group of Textile Artists in the Art Gallery
Speaker programme
Workshop programme
Fashion show
Tours of the textile Archive

Keynote Speaker - **Amber Butchart**
Saturday evening, 13th May

See www.sunnybankmills.co.uk for more information

SUNNY BANK MILLS

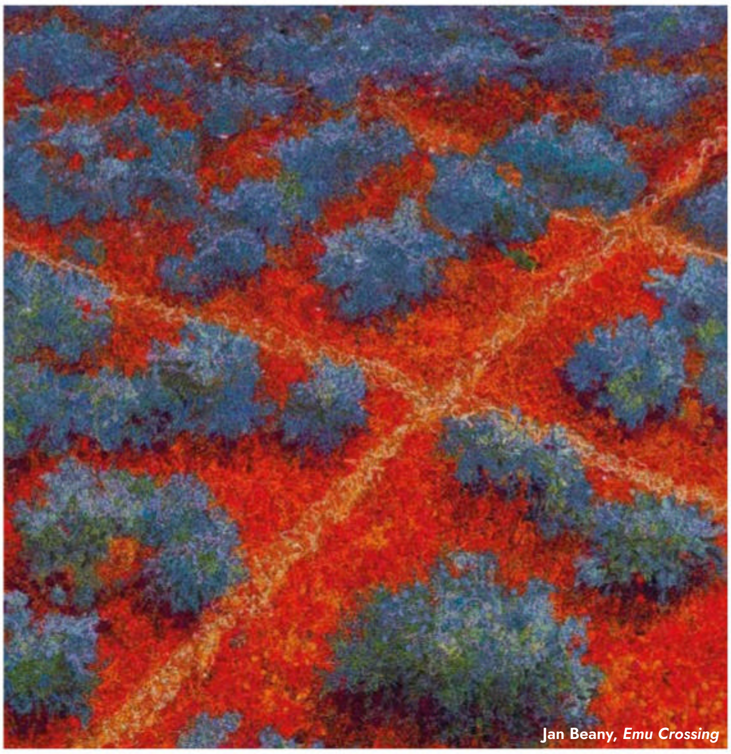
10 YEARS OF ARTS AND CULTURE

BEYOND MEASURE
the best
hand-picked
supplies for textile lovers
shopbeyondmeasure.co.uk

Embroiderers' Guild events

Talking Threads

an online series featuring two artists in discussion with 'Stitchery Stories' podcast host Susan Weeks


Jan Beany, *Emu Crossing*

Jan Beaney & Jean Littlejohn

ONLINE 9 March 7 - 9pm

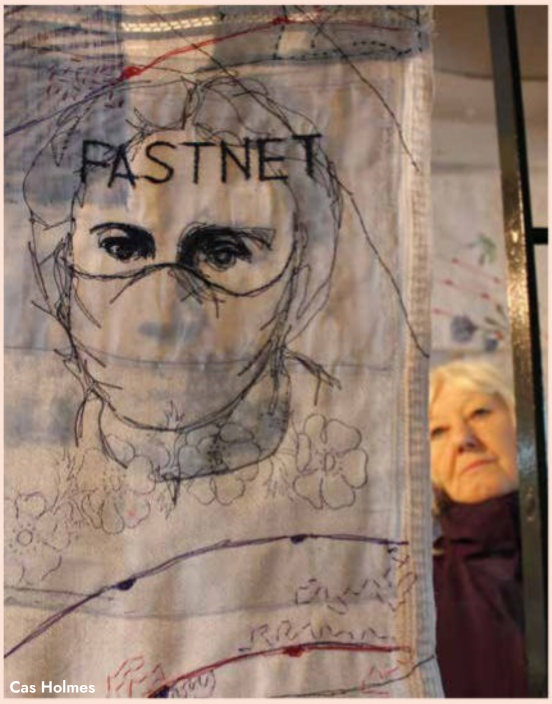
The highs and the lows of one of the best-known partnerships in the textile world, known everywhere simply as 'Jan and Jean'. Together they have inspired thousands of stitchers across the world and we will find out more about their processes, how they embrace new technology, their use of sketchbooks and what inspires them to keep stitching

Missed previous artists in conversation? The following are available on demand via our website www.embroiderersguild.com

Amanda Hislop & Ruth Issett: observation, drawing and use of colour

Vanessa Marr & Sarah Corbett: how they use textiles to 'make a point' - both are creative 'activists'

Claire Wellesley-Smith & Mandy Patullo: how to use stitch to promote wellbeing, through their use of pre-loved fabrics



Cas Holmes

Spring short workshops

a series of 1-1.5 hour workshops for a range of abilities, free for Guild members; non-members price is £10-15

Mark Making with Elnaz Yazdani *14 March*

A guide to a variety of hand embroidery techniques and stitches that you can apply to any cloth, clothing item or accessory so that you can carry on stitching beyond the workshop

Distorting Stitches with Felicity Alice *4 April*

Experimenting with a range of versatile stitches to alter the appearance of a basic stitch to develop a creative alternative

Working with Words with Cas Holmes *18 April*

Cas will share ideas surrounding her recent pieces in which text as part of a sometimes 'hidden, yet seen narrative' forms part of the conceptual process

Embroiderers' Guild

www.embroiderersguild.com

NEXT GENERATION
COMBINATION MACHINE

Hi-Definition Embroidery™

- Largest Embroidery Field – 280 x 460mm (11″ x 18.1″)
- Fastest Maximum Embroidery Speed – 1,200 SPM
- 1,230 Built-in Designs
- Industrial-strength Embroidery unit inspired by Janome Robotics

Hi-Definition Quilting™

- A.S.R. (Accurate Stitch Regulator) – Compatible with Rulers
- AcuFeed Flex Fabric Feeding System
- Largest Workspace – 343 x 140mm (13.5″ x 5.5″)

Hi-Definition Sewing™

- Slim Machine Head
- Bright, Shadowless Lights
- Powerful Motor:
  Speeds up to 1,300 SPM
  Penetration up to 13 layers of denim
- Needle bar thumbwheel for precise needle movement

CONTINENTAL M17

The world's leading sewing machine manufacturer

JANOME
www.janome.co.uk